

# HORIZON

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

Vol. XVIII No. 106 October 1948

## CONTENTS

PAGE

FREUD OR JUNG	Edward Glover	225
THE RICH WOMAN	Antonia White	259
NEW WORLD OF SPACE	Le Corbusier	279
NOVELIST-PHILOSOPHERS:		
XIV—THE DEAD CENTRE:		
AN INTRODUCTION TO		
NATHANAEL WEST	Alan Ross	284

REPRODUCTIONS OF DESIGNS BY LE CORBUSIER  
appear between pages 280 and 281

The Offices of HORIZON are at 53 Bedford Square, W.C.1. MUS: 3926.—  
Annual Subscription 32s. net, including postage; 6 months 16s.; U.S.A. and Canada: \$7.50 a year, single copies 75c. Agents for U.S.A.: Gotham Book Mart, 41 West 47th Street, New York City; Canada: The Jonathan David Co., 1501 St. Catherine Street West, Montreal, 25; Norway: Narvesens Kioskkompani, Stortingsgata 2, Oslo.  
All MSS. submitted should be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope, and will not otherwise be returned.

# NEW FABER BOOKS

## The Age of Anxiety

W. H. AUDEN

This arresting, new, long poem, which is set partly in a New York bar, takes the form of a dialogue between a woman and three men.

8s. 6d.

## On Seeming to Presume

LAWRENCE DURRELL

New poems for those with a discriminating palate. By the author of *Cities, Plains and People*.

8s. 6d.

## Jim Dandy

WILLIAM SAROYAN

Subtitled *Fat Man in a Famine*, Saroyan's new play displays again his unfailing originality and inimitable skill. (October 15) 7s. 6d.

## The Hidden Years

TRAVERS OTWAY

'It is that much-needed thing, a new play of real quality by an unknown author. The play turns on a friendship, forbidden but innocuous, between an older and a younger boy. The theme is handled with delicacy, fact and truth. The author shows how thoroughly he knows the world of schools. His group of men is extraordinarily well observed.'—*Daily Telegraph*.

15 original photographs. 8s. 6d.

## The Strange Life of Ivan Osokin

P. D. OUSPENSKY

This original and disturbing book is the only novel by the author of that prodigious work *Tertium Organum*. In it, he treats through the life of his hero the eternally fascinating problem: if you had your life to live again, what would you do with it? 7s. 6d.

## The Novels of Charles Williams

ALL HALLOWS' EVE, MANY DIMENSIONS,  
WAR IN HEAVEN, SHADOWS OF ECSTASY

'Mr. Williams is a poet, and when poetry is allied to black magic we may be sure of something out of the ordinary . . . will not fail to please both the materialist and the mystic.'—*Yorkshire Post*.

Each 8s. 6d.

## Portrait in Two Colours

STUART B. JACKMAN

'Describes how a soldier came home from the Persian desert to find he could not fit himself into post-war life. How he eventually did it is the theme of the book. It is a contrast of physical violence with mental agony, and forms itself into a first-class account of those deep spiritual struggles which any man of sensibility has to face.'—John Betjeman: *Daily Herald*. 8s. 6d.

[Comment will be resumed next month]

# EDWARD GLOVER

## FREUD OR JUNG

### INTRODUCTORY

THE appearance in these times of an article on the psychology of Jung written by a Freudian calls for some explanation. Jung was one of the more spectacular psycho-analytical schismatics; and for some years after he abandoned his early devotion to Freudian theories the public was entertained with acrimonious discussions between representatives of the two 'schools'. For reasons that will be considered later this gladiatorial phase has now passed. Under ordinary circumstances there would be no excuse for further polemical displays save the desirability of assessing from time to time and as dispassionately as may be the progress of psychological science, in particular of clinical psychology. And since the pace of psychological discovery is unhappily slow this need could well be met by a decennial review.

There are however two special circumstances which make an assessment of the relative significance of Freud and of Jung desirable at this juncture. The first is purely extrinsic, the second intrinsic. However careful psychologists may be not to derive from their work, or to countenance, more than the most sparing scientific *Weltanschauung*, they cannot prevent more enthusiastic searchers after a philosophy of life pursuing their favourite pastime. Still less can they prevent the exploitation of their psychological theories by self-appointed and tendentious commentators. And so from time to time our quarterlies publish essays in which, for example, the influence on modern thought of Freudian psychology or of Jungian psychology and sometimes the relation of these psychological systems to the Marxian dialectic is set forth with considerable dexterity if not always with accurate understanding.

Much more excusable is the attempt of writers on aesthetics to supplement the rather scrappy formulations on these subjects that are thinly scattered throughout the writings of Freud and, more plentifully, in those of Jung. These unsolicited efforts to apply and expand psychological theory are dictated to some extent by a not altogether unjustifiable impatience with the slowness of psychological discovery. Particularly in the field of aesthetics, Freudian formulations have been strictly limited to pointing out the infantile and unconscious origins of the sublimatory process and the part played by creative sublimations in preventing, controlling or assuaging unconscious conflict, in other words in helping to maintain peace of mind. Beyond that the Freudian has not seen fit to go. Nor, to put it quite frankly, is the average analyst qualified to do so. Like most psychiatrists, he has neither the cultural feeling nor the type of education necessary to pursue these matters beyond the limits of his professional vision. The average psycho-analyst is a craftsman, not an artist.

Unfortunately such non-analytical writers as have the necessary cultural background seldom possess the technical qualifications which would justify their taking the law into their own hands. Thus in a recent article on the psychology of surrealism<sup>1</sup> the author mars an otherwise perfectly sensible essay by neglecting to distinguish between *unconscious conflict*, a universal phenomenon marking the opposition between man's instinctual inheritance and the limitations imposed on him by reality and, on the other hand, a *neurotic solution of excessive conflict* due to a combination of constitutional causes, developmental flaws in the mental apparatus and a precipitating factor of frustration. 'It is time', he says, 'to point out and underline the gross limitations of Freudianism in its approach to art. Its study of the pathological led to the formulation of an aesthetic that looked upon the artist as a neurotic and art as a case of sublimation.' Inevitably the author draws comparison with Jung: 'Since Jung rejects the Freudian conception of the unconscious, he also objects to the theory that art is an attempt to find a surrogate for an unsatisfactory reality.' And again 'It is his (Jung's) belief, and here he is eminently sound, that a work of art exists in its own right'. The casual reader is thus left with the impression that Freudian values have been perverted by an excessive concern with disordered products, a hackneyed criticism this

<sup>1</sup> Glicksberg. *Polemic*, No. 8.

and that by contrast Jungian values are in some way or other 'healthier', or, at any rate, more suitable to the understanding of aesthetics.

An even more regrettable, and from the creative point of view disastrous, consequence of ill-digested psychological information is manifested in the productions of writers and artists who have been either profoundly intrigued by psychological interpretations of the central themes of human conflict, or fascinated by the products of associative thinking both visual and verbal. The most striking examples are provided by surrealist writers and painters who are apparently under the impression that by adopting the technique of 'free presentation' they can either directly express unconscious content or quicken the creative process. As the very self-consciousness of many surrealist presentations goes to show, this misapprehension is based on an incapacity to distinguish clearly between the *primary processes* that govern unconscious function and the *secondary processes* that regulate the activity of the (pre) conscious mind.<sup>1</sup> Even the most distorted products of schizophrenic imagination include elaborate contributions from the pre-conscious system of the mind. On this matter of 'giving direct expression to the unconscious', it can only be said that where the schizophrenic fails it is not likely the artist will succeed.

Still greater confusion of thought is displayed by those writers who have been seduced by the attractions of the case-history. Forgetting that a case-history is a functional balance-sheet to be read in terms of effective adaptation, they prostitute whatever artistic talent or dramatic sense they may possess to a professional under-lining of clinical themes. A recent reviewer of the prose works of Pierre Jean Jouve remarks: 'No doubt it is a function of the novelist to incorporate the new discoveries of depth psychology

<sup>1</sup> In the primary process the energy activating unconscious content constantly strives for discharge and in so doing makes use of certain primitive mechanisms, in particular 'condensation' and 'displacement'. In the unconscious system no considerations of time, reality or logic exist: no contradictions are recognized: unconscious systems are governed solely by the pleasure-principle and the repetition compulsion. In the secondary processes characteristic of the pre-conscious system the ego blocks the tendency to discharge and develops faculties of logical and intelligent judgement. These processes are accelerated by the development of the reality principle which is derived from continued experience of frustration, also by the organization of the power of speech.

in his work, but he can do this only by transmuting it, by seizing that essence of artistic truth which lies entangled among the jargon.' Actually it is no part of the function of the novelist to do so; rather it should be his concern to express the artistic truth which lies entangled in his own mind. Otherwise more likely than not he will entangle the mind of his reader in psychological confusions. Jouven himself, it would seem, is passionately devoted to the theories of Freud but combines this devotion not only with a highly individualized form of Christian ethic but with an archaic conception of atonement which is reminiscent of the archetypal metaphysics of Jung.

Here then is a partial justification for shaking the old bones of the Freud-Jung controversy. Obviously under a free press there can be no interference with the liberty of the subject to produce essays in applied psycho-analysis or in applied Jungian psychology or both: but at least the subject should possess an accurate knowledge of the principles he is applying, and understand to what extent the differences between the two schools are irreconcilable.

The second circumstance justifying a reassessment of the contributions to psychology of Freud and of Jung is, as has been suggested, essentially intrinsic in nature, that is to say, it is a factor inherent in the evolution of psychological science. It is, in the same token, a typical post-war reaction, a manifestation of the expiatory process which comes on the heels of major catastrophes whether these be natural or man-made. Experience of two world wars has demonstrated that after the cessation of hostilities social activities are governed by two opposing tendencies: to continue war-making in an unofficial and less destructive form and to engage somewhat aggressively in making peace. On the one hand, the sudden diversion of hostility from the common enemy leads to every variety of social upheaval; on the other, surplus drives towards peace-making, being denied effective diplomatic expression, are diverted to any field of endeavour where conflict of one kind or another prevails. Not the least intriguing form of surplus peace-making is to be observed in the field of psychological science. Certainly it cannot be denied that pre-war psychology was distinguished by a smouldering warfare and that there is nowadays a significant drive towards composition of psychological differences. After the United Nations a United Psychology.

Before we lightly accept the assumption that this new development is motivated solely by scientific ideals it is well to review the origin of those conflicts which, up to the commencement of the Second World War, embittered the relations of psychological schools. For certainly no new psychological discoveries were made in wartime that would justify the composition of scientific differences. On the contrary and despite the wartime craze for psychiatry, the war period was completely barren of psychological progress. Psychology in fact embarked on one of those headlong regressions that are inevitable when military necessity rather than scientific ideals provides the mainspring for psychological action. The only conclusion to be drawn from the technique of wartime psychiatry is that necessity is the mother of compromise, a conclusion sufficiently axiomatic to be in no particular need of corroboration.

But if no new discoveries have been made to justify a collaborationist movement within a conflict-ridden science, we are faced with the alternative assumptions either that earlier conflicts were non-essential or that for one reason or another they are now in process of being glossed over. In my opinion these earlier conflicts were inevitable and fundamental. Despite the passage of time the resistance to Freud's discovery of the unconscious mind remains unabated both within and without the psycho-analytic movement. Within, it is signalized by schisms and controversies; outside, Freud's theories are either openly opposed, or discreetly watered down or again mingled with non-analytical contributions to form a compost of contradictory assumptions.

It is to this last form of opposition that the 'eclectic' psychologist has devoted his reactionary energies. Preening himself on his scientific detachment and his capacity to take only the 'best' from each school, the eclectic is not very much concerned whether a 'little bit' of Freud and a 'little bit' of Jung when dovetailed with 'little bits' of Adler or Stekel forms a crazy pavement so long as the pavement offers a short cut to therapeutic success, a criterion which, as we shall see, does not establish the validity of any theory. The eclectic in fact does more than any other practitioner to obstruct the progress of clinical psychology. It is no service to psychology to gloss over fundamental differences. On the contrary it only obscures a fundamental fact, namely, that *so long as objective psychologies of the unconscious exist*

there are bound to be irreconcilable differences between those who support them unreservedly, those who merely render them lip-service and those who repudiate them.

Now although it is too soon to observe the influence on the lay public of professional efforts to consolidate psychological theory it is safe to assume that the attitude of the average reader will be receptive to the new eclecticism. And this means in effect that with the passage of time, the most comforting theories of mental function will tend to resume their earlier sway. This tendency will no doubt be sedulously fostered by the Churches. Freud's discovery of the unconscious mind had confronted theologians with some awkward problems and already there is some evidence that Roman Catholic priests when called on by their parishioners to deliver judgement on the psychologies of Jung and Freud, being unable summarily to reject both systems, throw their weight on the side of Jungian theory which in some way or another is felt to be closer to religious belief than the 'deterministic' psychology of Freud. Admittedly it is difficult to assess public opinion in these matters with accuracy: but in the absence of more exact information it is perhaps legitimate to quote from the public utterances of an apostle of the mid-brows. Broadcasting recently on the subject of Jung, Mr. J. B. Priestley delivered himself of the following opinions: '... he (Jung) seems to me not only one of the great original thinkers of our time but also one of its few liberators... he has brought the West closer to the immemorial and profoundly intuitive East; and has discovered at least one way out of the nightmare maze in which modern Western man was beginning to lose himself.'

Speaking of Jung's concept of the Collective Unconscious Priestley remarks, 'I for one find a liberating force in this theory... It enlarges man instead of cutting him down... It (the collective unconscious) is an essential part of our real selves... This is what all the great religions have told us and here Jung, pursuing a piecemeal of scientific research to its logical conclusions has come close to religion.' And again: 'perhaps Jung's greatest achievement is that—that using the instrument of modern Western man, the scientific intellect, he has cleared a way through dark jungles into blinding mountain air, where below, on the spiral mountain path of man's inquiries into the spirit...' And so on in the Jungian idiom. Small wonder that he dismisses Freud with a few summarizing

remarks unequalled for their compact ignorance. Thus ' (Jung's) unconscious . . . was clearly not the unconscious that the Freudians described, a mere small lumber-room for the conscious mind'. ' (Freud's) theory . . . was far too limited.' And the like.

Now it is vain to expect apostles to display a sense of scientific responsibility. Their primary allegiance is to their creed. Having read and re-read Jung 'with increasing pleasure and profit' Mr. Priestley naturally wishes to share with his listeners the comfort he, as a 'battered and baffled' fellow-man, 'has extracted from his reading. Indeed he goes out of his way to disclaim authority, and with authority, of course, responsibility. His address begins in fact with a short sentence that might have come more appropriately at its end. 'I am not a psychologist,' he says. True enough; but his millions of listeners equally battered and baffled are likely to take this modest disclaimer as an additional proof of common sense. Unable, as Mr. Priestley is unable, to distinguish which parts of Jungian psychology are derived from Freud and which parts are peculiar to Jung, they are likely to fall back on and fortify earlier prejudices, to regard Jung as a great mystic who is also a great liberator and Freud as the purveyor of a diseased psychology, dull, dry, disappointing and probably dirty.

#### CRITERIA OF ASSESSMENT

Should the foregoing considerations persuade the reader that the time is ripe to reopen the Freud-Jung controversy, he may well demand to be provided with some criteria with which to carry out his assessments. How, in fact, does one set about comparing one psychological theory or system with another?

The first step in this direction is to rid oneself of a natural prejudice. The psychologies of Freud and Jung having been derived originally from study of disordered mental states it was at first natural to think that the validity of a clinical theory could be determined by the results of treatment based on that theory. But alas! the therapeutic criterion was to prove a broken reed. The most satisfying theory of schizophrenia, for example, does not overcome the average schizophrenic's inaccessibility to analytical influence. The 'gain from illness' unconsciously extracted from an apparently simple psychoneurosis may render the latter refractory to treatment by any method. For the matter of that a visit to Brighton or an intercurrent attack of influenza may

coincide with a remission in an apparently chronic mental disorder; yet he would be a hardy speculator who would make such observations the basis of a theory of psychological climatology or of psycho-toxic function, still less the basis of a general theory of mental activity.

The truth is that no psychological theory is worth the paper it is written on unless it can give an objective account of the structure, function and dynamics of mind, can trace the stages of mental development from infancy to senescence, can indicate the main factors giving rise to mental disorder and correlate these with the mechanisms responsible for the more significant manifestations of normal mental life both individual and social.

At this point a difficulty arises which might appear to wreck any attempt to apply these criteria. The 'normal' psychologist, for example, whose most daring excursions into the territories of mind have never taken him beyond the superficial layers of the pre-conscious where much that he finds is familiar, logical and safe, might, indeed I think does, claim that his descriptive system satisfy most of these standards. Yet as Freud once remarked, 'psychology which cannot explain dreams is also useless for the elucidation of normal psychical activity and has no claim to be called a science'.<sup>1</sup> In fact since Freud's discovery of the unconscious mind no account of mental function can be regarded as satisfactory which does not include a full description of unconscious processes. To the Jungian partisan such an axiom might appear to prejudge the issue by insisting on the validity of Freud's conception of the unconscious: yet in fact it does not prevent the institution of comparisons between Freudian and Jungian systems. It is not disputed that prior to his break with Freud, Jung freely accepted Freudian views. That Jung's subsequent formulations deviated in fundamental respects from his earlier views, so far from being an obstacle to comparative study, provides us with a convenient starting point for comparison. Indeed sooner or later we are bound to ask two questions, first, whether the concept of the unconscious advanced by Jung after his deviation from Freud bears any resemblance to the Freudian concept of the unconscious and second, whether these parts of Jungian theory which bear resemblance to or even contradict Freudian theory constitute, as is popularly assumed, an improvement on Freudian concepts.

<sup>1</sup> *The Question of Lay-Analysis.* (Translation.) Imago Publishing Co. 1930

## GENERAL THEORY OF MIND

As has already been indicated, the description of mental processes involves a threefold approach to the subject. Although the psychologist is not concerned with the locality of mind, he finds himself compelled to postulate for purposes of presentation a certain degree of mental organization which can be conveniently referred to as mental *structure*. Having done so he is then compelled to describe the *energies* which activate this organization or apparatus. Once embarked on this process he cannot stop short of describing the *mechanisms* by which the mental apparatus regulates these energies. This threefold approach constitutes what Freud termed the *metapsychological* approach to the descriptive data, either reported or introspected, that constitute the raw material of psychology.<sup>1</sup>

**MENTAL STRUCTURE.** To begin then with the *structure of mind*, it may be noted that this concept was an inevitable consequence of Freud's discovery of unconscious 'content'. For if it can be demonstrated that ideas and potential effects exist apart from consciousness, yet can be made conscious by the use of a technique which overcomes certain 'resistances', it is legitimate to postulate an *unconscious system* of the mind (*ucs*). This Freud did, adding that the resistances indicated the existence of a barrier of repression, a kind of psychic frontier. Henceforward *consciousness* was regarded as another system of mind having psychic perceptual functions to perform (*pcpt-cs*). Between these two systems lay yet another, the content of which though at any given moment descriptively unconscious yet could be recalled more or less at will. This he called the *pre-conscious system* (*pcs*), avoiding thereby the term 'sub-conscious' which confuses the vital distinction between the conscious and the true (dynamic) unconscious. This tripartite division constituted Freud's first rough outline of the *mental apparatus*, an organization whose function it is to receive the incoming charges of (internal) instinct and stimulations coming

<sup>1</sup> The account of Freudian principles given in this essay is drawn from the writings of Freud and from those of his followers who have applied those principles without deviation. It specifically excludes some recent theories of child psychology which have gained currency amongst a small group of psychoanalysts in this country and which, in the writer's view, constitute a deviation from Freudian principles and practice, combining, it is interesting to note, some of the errors of both Rank and Jung.

from the external world, to master these charges and stimulations and to procure them satisfactory discharge (adaptation).

At this stage the position of the ego was not very clearly defined. It was regarded as a surface organ of the psyche, including the whole territory of the pre-conscious system, having instincts and mechanisms of its own which were set in action not only by the external necessities of life but by any irruption of unconscious or repressed instincts from the unconscious system (ucs) that threatened the ego with danger. Further investigations however convinced Freud that the unconscious was not solely comprised of primitive instincts and repressed derivatives and that a large part of the ego itself, including that part responsible for repression, was itself unconscious, in both the descriptive and the dynamic sense of the term. It was at this time that Freud published his description of the *super-ego*, an unconscious institution that performs the function of scrutinizing instinctual urges and according to its standards instigating the unconscious ego to acts of defence. Without abandoning the concept of a mental apparatus or in any way discounting the importance of repression, Freud decided to abandon the concept of specifically ego instincts, and to include all instinctual forces within a special mental system which he termed the *Id*. (the *It*). The term was adopted to indicate the impersonal (non-ego) nature of the system. However deeply the Ego might penetrate the *Id*, however unconscious parts of the ego might be, it was still a surface organ, a psychic cortex to the *Id*, a special agency of the psyche turned directly towards the external world, in a word, a psychic organ of adaptation.

This new tripartite division (*Id*, *Super-ego* and *Ego*) represented an immeasurable advance. Thenceforward the energies of Freud and of his followers were concentrated on tracing stage by stage the early development of *ego-institutions*, for already the nature of *Id* instincts had been roughly outlined, in particular the early forms and modifications of infantile sexual instinct and the hates and rivalries that are engendered by these libidinal instincts. It was now possible to institute a parallel series of investigations, correlating stages in development of infantile impulse with stages in the development of the ego and super-ego, indicating *en route* the particular unconscious mechanisms characteristic of mental defence at each stage. Here was indeed a focal point starting from which the student might, according to his

predilection, trace the history of character and conscience, or discover etiological formulae that would account for disorders varying in depth from schizophrenia to inferiority feeling, from homicidal psychopathy to social disagreeableness, from infantile perversion to platonic love. In a word it became possible to abandon old and misleading classifications of mental phenomena based on mainly descriptive criteria and to substitute for these meta-psychological classifications that will some day become Linnaean in magnitude and complexity.

Here then in brief outline is an account of what Priestley, pontificating on Jung, steps aside to describe as a 'limited' theory, based on an unconscious system that is a mere 'lumber-room' to the conscious. Let us see how the Freudian lumber-room compares with the Jungian edifice which, according to Priestley, contains 'treasures of the utmost value' to his 'battered and baffled fellow-men'.

Approaching his concepts in order of descending magnitude,<sup>1</sup> we find that the focal point or perhaps one should say the final psychological product of Jung's entire system is the *Self* or *Subject*. This comprises both personal and racial elements and includes the entire psyche both conscious and unconscious. The *psyche* in its turn is the totality of all psychological processes and, since all experience is psychic, includes all experience. It is broader than and contains the *soul* which in turn is the personality attitude displayed by the individual to his unconscious. *Mind* is equated with conscious psychological activity, consciousness or intelligence. The psyche is then subdivided into three *systems*; the *Conscious*, the *Personal Unconscious* and the racial or *Collective Unconscious*. Scrutinizing these systems to determine the position of the *Ego*, we find that the outermost side of the conscious system is made up of a function-complex called the *Persona*. It is exclusively concerned with the individual's relation to the object world but is by no means identical with the individual. Here at

<sup>1</sup> The summaries of Jung's psychology given throughout this essay have been made from Jung's own writings (translated and untranslated). They also include definitions given by Jacobi in the *Psychology of Jung* (1943). Authoritative publications by Hinkle, Long, Baynes, G. Adler and others have also been consulted.

last we find the Ego. The ego is surrounded by the mantle of the persona, a focal point for the conscious system;<sup>1</sup> yet it is the unitary totality of our personal psychosomatic being. The ego is thus an islet on the sea of consciousness which in its turn is an islet on the boundless sea of the unconscious.

Pursuing these relations further we find that lying next to the conscious system is the Personal Unconscious. As distinct from the Collective Unconscious which is innate the Personal Unconscious is acquired. It consists of repressed, neglected and unapprehended elements. In an endeavour to correlate these concepts with the terms 'pre-conscious' and 'sub-conscious' which are freely but often inaccurately employed by psychologists at large, Jacobi states that the 'pre-conscious' (and here she means the Freudian pre-conscious) corresponds to that part of the Jungian Personal Unconscious which faces consciousness. Under the heading of the 'sub-conscious' (a term which incidentally Freud explicitly rejected as meaning little more than pre-conscious but which many psychologists erroneously assume to be identical with Freud's dynamic 'unconscious') Jacobi includes the 'unrecalled, unintended and unnoticed matters'. This 'sub-conscious', in the Jungian reckoning, lies between the fully conscious and the Collective Unconscious. Presumably therefore the pre-conscious is that part of the Jungian Personal Unconscious which faces consciousness and the 'sub-conscious' (as defined above) that part of the Personal Unconscious which faces the Collective Unconscious. In other words the 'sub-conscious' can be identified more or less with the Personal Unconscious of Jung, not with Jung's Collective Unconscious.

<sup>1</sup> There seems to be some confusion between the concept of the ego as presented by Jung and that outlined by some of his followers. Jung insists that the ego is purely conscious though he sometimes would like to break this rule. Jacobi says it is not exclusively conscious but is a *centre of reference* for conscious and unconscious psychic contents alike. And since Jung maintains first, that the conscious results from a prior unconscious psyche, second, that the ego was born in the conscious mind and, third, that the ego 'turns its back' on the unconscious mind it is clearly possible to have it both ways. Indeed Jung constantly toys with the notion that *another* ego exists in the unconscious but has little hope of finding it or at any rate of finding an order in the unconscious similar to that of ego-consciousness. Yet, he says, something must hold the unconscious together. 'Can it be', he asks, 'that the unconscious lost its centre when the ego was born?' Clearly then he does not want to make the ego part of the unconscious. He wants two counter-balancing entities.

Turning now to the Collective Unconscious we discover that this includes content not specific for the individual or acquired through individual experience but content acquired from the inherited possibility of psychic functioning in general, an inheritance common to all humanity. The Collective Unconscious is, however, divided into two regions, the first and nearest to the Personal Unconscious is a region of emotions, affects and primitive drives capable to some extent of rational control. Behind or below this or, to use another expression, at the obscure centre of the Collective Unconscious are contents possessing elemental force, eternally incomprehensible and never to be assimilated fully by the ego. *The centre of the core can never be made conscious* although more superficially placed content and emotions can erupt into consciousness as in the neuroses and psychoses and in the visions and hallucinations of creative spirits.

And here, leaving out of account for the moment such concepts (structures, functions or contents) as the *shadow*, the *anima* and *animus* and the *archetype*, we may pause to take stock. To a Freudian, contact with some of Jung's theoretical concepts is at first as bewildering as the experiences of Alice through the Looking-glass. The terms have a familiar ring, which is not surprising since some of them were originally coined by Freud; but they have come to mean something quite new and strange. The 'pre-conscious' part of Jung's Personal Unconscious is a region of subliminal contents waiting, so to speak, for the summons before they enter into consciousness. The deeper 'sub-conscious' on the other hand though still a part of the Personal Unconscious includes unrecalled, unintended and unnoticed matters lying between the fully conscious and the Collective Unconscious. Where exactly the repressed lies is not very clear. Apparently it lies mainly in the 'land of childhood' (a personal concept) where however itmingles with derivatives of the Collective Unconscious. The Jungian Personal Unconscious therefore includes the repressed but contains also matter that in the Freudian sense is capable of becoming conscious (the Freudian pre-conscious). Yet even the 'sub-conscious' layer of the Personal Unconscious which contains the repressed is distinct from the more important Collective Unconscious which presumably has some barrier of its own to separate its perpetually unconscious core from ego-consciousness.

To judge however from the reference to repression of child memories some mingling takes place at the more superficial levels. Nevertheless Jung's whole concept of the Personal Unconscious indicates that in his view it is a comparatively shallow system paling in significance before his all-powerful Collective Unconscious. And it may be noted in passing that Jung seeks, time and again, to identify this Personal Unconscious with the 'dynamic unconscious' of Freud.

The complications that beset Jung's concepts are however best illustrated by reference to his ego theory. Certain dreams, visions and mystical experiences suggest to him the existence of a kind of consciousness in the unconscious. This idea involves however the existence of an ego in the unconscious and he is constantly on the watch for traces of a personality in the unconscious which he regards as intelligent and purposive implying thereby that it takes cognizance. It is not clear whether Jung rejects the idea of a transcendental consciousness existing 'above' ego-consciousness but he maintains that if it does exist its centre cannot be the human ego, which moreover being, according to Jung, essentially conscious is ineligible to function as a centre either to his Personal or his Collective Unconscious. Now if this means anything it means that he is uncertain whether there are not after all three types of dynamic ego (or at any rate ego traces) of which at least two can in their own way take cognizance, and at least one, existing in the Collective Unconscious, display intuition. The unconscious, he maintains, *personates*.

Although it is no part of my task to indicate ways out of the Jungian tangle of structural concepts, I am tempted to suggest that the main source of confusion lies in Jung's neglect of the developmental factors that must inevitably play a part in the building up of his Personal Unconscious. As it stands the Jungian Personal Unconscious is indeed a lumber-room, to borrow Mr. Priestley's phrase. Alternatively the difficulty may be said to arise from the narrowness of Jung's concept of the Ego and from his ambivalent reaction to the concept of an unconscious Ego. Both of these suggestions point to a third, namely, that the psychic structure of the child's mind is *terra incognita* to Jung who is clearly more at home either with schemata of the adult mind, which incidentally lend themselves readily to anthropomorphization, or with outlines of inaccessible psychic content that is either prehistoric or

transcendental in nature. Whatever may be the validity of these suggestions it is clear that the popular view according to which Jung's unconscious system is somehow broader or deeper than that of Freud is entirely fanciful. The concept of the dynamic unconscious originally advanced by Freud has been split up by Jung. One part has been assigned to a new container and branded with Jung's trade mark—the 'Collective Unconscious'. Another has been dissociated, reduced in dynamic significance and allocated to the Personal Unconscious. This now less important and mainly pre-conscious Jungian system is however represented as being Freud's whole stock-in-trade and returned to him labelled in a way calculated to bewilder the uninformed. Needless to say this transmogrification of Freud renders it extremely difficult to make any useful comparison between the systems of mental economics advanced respectively by Freud and by Jung. An organism with transposed organs cannot be expected to function according to the original plan. Under these circumstances the best we can do is to isolate these concepts which are not just transmogrified Freud and consider whether these purely Jungian contributions offer us any scientific premium that would justify their acceptance.

To return then to Jung's concept of the Collective Unconscious we find that the qualifying term had originally a number of connotations. 'Collective', which would have been better represented by the term Racial, means also to him ideas common to the populace. At one point Jung tried to draw an analogy between the infant's (racial) 'knowing how' (to breathe, etc.), and racial 'knowing how' (to symbolize, etc.). But generally speaking his Collective Unconscious is represented as being a thing of nature, neutral as far as moral, aesthetic and intellectual judgements go. It is like a collective human being having at its command a human experience of millions of years, a potential system of psychic functioning handed down by generations of men, a phylogenetic substructure of the modern mind. Whereas conscious attitudes are directed by a Superior (in the sense of predominating) Function which stands at the disposal of the individual's conscious and belongs to the conscious system, the Collective Unconscious is the repository of Inferior (in the sense of unexercised) Functions. These include not only totally undifferentiated functions but functions which have through neglect or disuse sunk into the unconscious, presumably via the Personal

Unconscious. There they are entirely beyond the disposal of the individual's will and apparently can cause a good deal of trouble.

To the exact nature of these Superior and Inferior Functions which, incidentally, comprise thinking, feeling, intuition and sensation, we shall have occasion to return. In the meantime we may note that Jung also uses the term inferior to indicate less commendable qualities associated with a person's uncontrolled emotional manifestations: the existence of these morally and, it would seem also, functionally inferior qualities led Jung to formulate the concept of the *shadow*. Regarding the exact nature of this structure, Jung is rather reticent. He implies at some points, and Jacobi supports the view, that the shadow can appertain to ego-consciousness, to the Personal Unconscious and to the Collective Unconscious. Yet Jung's main utterances on this subject make clear that it is a variety of personality in the unconscious, indeed a focal point of the Collective Unconscious.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish Jung's *Shadow* from the other personality which he finds in the unconscious and which goes by the name of *anima* in the case of man and in the case of woman *animus*. In the formation of both shadow and anima sex factors (predispositions) seem to play a determining part. Thus the shadow of a man is masculine whereas his anima is feminine. Originally Jung freely identified the anima with the *soul*, by which he meant a personality reaction to the unconscious. Hence the anima came to be contrasted with the *persona* or personality reaction to the world of objects. The location of the anima was then rather uncertain: it could stand as a reaction system facing the Collective Unconscious or it could be part of the Collective Unconscious, indeed a focal part, a kind of personality in it. In later presentations uncertainty as to the status of the anima or animus continues. The animus represents the masculine element in woman: the anima the feminine elements in man. The woman has several animi because woman is consciously, the monogamous sex; on the same principle man, being polygamous has but one anima. Yet, says Jung, since the Collective Unconscious is more than personal, so the anima is not always merely the feminine aspect of individual man. It has an archetypical aspect—the eternal feminine—which embodies an experience of woman far older than that of the individual. Animus and anima, Jung goes on to remark, are natural 'archetypes', primordial figures of the

unconscious and have given rise to the mythological gods and goddesses. Obviously he says they live or function in the deeper layers of the mind.

But what of the *archetypes*? These, according to Jung, designate collective psychic content that has been subjected to no conscious treatment but represents an immediate psychic actuality, as in dreams and visions, to be distinguished from myths which are collective contents originally derived from the unconscious, but modified in a particular way and transmitted by esoteric teaching. Archetypes are patterns common to the whole of humanity, primordial types, images impressed on the mind since of old. They are, says Jacobi on Jung's behalf, 'representations of instinctive—i.e. psychologically necessary—responses to certain situations, which, circumventing consciousness, lead by virtue of their innate potentialities to behaviour corresponding to the psychological necessity even though it may not always appear appropriate when rationally viewed from without'. They do not, says Jung, consist of inherited ideas but of inherited predispositions to reaction. At the same time they are the organs of the soul. In the language of the unconscious which is a picture language, the archetypes appear in personified or symbolized picture form. The myths of creation, the virgin birth, the forms of the snake, the Great Mother, the eternal feminine, Paradise, fourfoldness, the number three, all these are archetypical figures and formations of the Collective Unconscious.

It would be absurd to suggest that any psychological system can be condensed to a few paragraphs without doing some violence to its outline: nor, for the matter of that, is it possible to indicate by a few quotations the immense lather of verbosity in which Jung's concepts are smothered. From the point of view of scientific exposition Jung is at the best of times a confused writer, apparently unable to call a spade a spade and to keep on calling it a spade. Whether these peculiarities of style are due to the nature of his theories or to his own modes of thought is difficult to determine.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jung certainly manifests an uncontrollable propensity to pattern-making; and this is avowedly connected with his passion for the science of alchemy and, literally speaking, venerable numbers. Jacobi states not without pride that what sexuality is to Freud so is the number four to Jung.

On many occasions he states quite frankly that he is anxious to avoid dogmatic theory and the fact that he leaves all his ends untied may possibly account in part for the many inconsistencies and occasional evasions that mar his theoretical presentation. Nevertheless allowing for possible misunderstandings and the necessity of overcondensed presentation, the foregoing account is accurate enough to permit some theoretical examination of his concept of the Collective Unconscious, and of the relations existing between its different parts and the ego.

Now when comparing different psychological systems it is essential to use common measures. Of these the most suitable is based on the premise that all mental activity is the result of changes, either qualitative or quantitative, in the state of mental energy. These changes are governed by three main factors, (a) 'constitutional', (b) 'predisposing' and (c) 'precipitating' or 'exciting'. The first is innate, the second developmental and the third immediate. It is from the interaction of these three factors that both normal and abnormal psychic manifestations acquire their characteristic form. Naturally most observers find it convenient to explain mental manifestations in terms of the third group, i.e., 'immediate' or 'exciting' causes, usually regarded as environmental in nature. Should this attempt miscarry their next step is to attribute the manifestations in question to 'constitutional' (innate) factors. Only when all other means have failed do they display a reluctant interest in 'developmental' factors 'predisposing' to normal or abnormal states. As a rule therefore it is easy to establish a direct ratio between the stress laid on constitutional and precipitating factors on the one hand and ignorance of developmental (individual) factors on the other.

Perhaps the best example of this state of affairs is afforded by pre-Freudian views of sexuality. In pre-Freudian times sexuality was held to originate at puberty; variations in sexual disposition and behaviour were regarded as exclusively constitutional. When Freud established that sexuality reaches an early peak of development at the age of five, it became clear that pubertal manifestations were decisively influenced by individual (predisposing) factors and to that extent constitutional elements were scaled down to make way for individual elements. Similarly with other psychic manifestations. As knowledge of infantile stages in mental development increased, the importance of constitutional factors

and the particularity with which they were described, shrank rapidly until constitutional elements were ultimately described in vague terms as inherited tendencies or predispositions and thought of as acquiring immanence through the genes.

Now in so far as Jung is convinced of the overwhelming importance of the Collective Unconscious (and it must be remembered that although he appears to be sincerely convinced of this, he also adduces considerations which if correct would reduce its importance to the level of purely conscious forces and factors) he is clearly an ardent champion of the constitutional factor. And it is not without significance that his views regarding individual developmental factors are reactionary. Not only is Jung's Personal Unconscious a shallow system but practically the whole of his clinical observations and aphorisms are concerned with the conscious or near conscious reactions of adults. The fact that the mental development of infants and children can be mapped out in consecutive periods and that from month to month and from year to year the structure of mind becomes in both conscious and unconscious aspects increasingly complex, the fact that primitive infantile function is gradually overlapped by more sophisticated functions which though primitive enough are yet more adult than infantile, all this seems to have left Jung untouched and unconcerned. Indeed it is hard for any Freudian who takes the trouble to immerse his mind in Jungian psychology to avoid the horrid suspicion that Jung is nothing more or less than a pre-Freudian who having at first let himself be carried in the stream of Freudian thought has ever since striven to make his peace with conscious psychology.

This has happened time and again with Freudian schismatics. Breuer, quite frankly terrified by the deep waters in which he found himself, scrambled to the bank and abjured any further interest in dynamic psychology. There was indeed a certain homesickness in Breuer's avowal of social and professional alarm. Other schismatics have followed other courses. Rank recanted his Freudian opinions and built a 'reactive psychology' in which all subsequent developments both normal and abnormal were correlated with variations in the experience of a 'birth trauma'. The recently developed Klein system of child psychology maintains that psychic development is governed by systems originating in the first six months of life. Adler's will to power is essentially

a reaction to constitutional factors. Horney on the other hand abandoned dynamic psychology for a meticulous concern with the superficial rugosities of character. There are in fact three ways of attempting either implicitly or explicitly to negate Freudian views regarding unconscious function, first, to operate in terms of conscious or superficial pre-conscious psychology; second, to exaggerate the importance of constitutional or immediately post-natal factors and third, to give up psychology altogether.

Of these the most difficult to counter by scientific argument is the method of *emphasizing pre-structural elements* in psychological development. For there is a point in the investigation of infantile mental processes before which it is impossible to check theories by direct scientific examination of the material. That point is represented by the acquisition of the faculty to understand the meaning of verbally expressed ideas. In other words it is impossible to analyse children and therefore fully to explore their unconscious minds before the period when they can understand the analyst's interpretations. It is true the child's rudimentary speech and behaviour can be observed; but there are no means of checking the inferences as to unconscious function drawn by the observer from these data. The only criterion that can be applied to theories of early mental development is the extremely shaky one of plausibility. Herein I think lies the main attraction of the Jungian concept of the Collective Unconscious. Plausibility is a subjective factor. It is in any case hard enough to know what is going on in the mind of a two-year-old. A constant temptation exists to avoid the arduous task of individual research on sucking by saying that what we don't know or can't understand is constitutional, the more so if this constitutional factor is decked out with 'content' that purports to represent in allegorical form the pre-history of the race. A romantical proceeding this, free from the tedious inconveniences and bafflements of nursery investigation.

But it would be manifestly unfair to suggest that Jung is nothing more than a psychological romantic. The idea that in psychology as in somatic affairs ontogeny repeats in blurred outline the story of phylogeny has stimulated many psychologists. Its application to psychic affairs calls, however, for the closest discipline and, other things being equal, preference should be given

Explanations in terms of individual development. Admittedly we can infer the nature of unconscious processes only from direct and reported introspections; and psycho-biology compels us to assume the existence of constitutional variations; but at the very least we must examine the embryonic stages of individual development to see whether they could not account satisfactorily for those mental contents that led Jung to develop his theory of the collective or racial unconscious. Thus when considering the significance of Jung's archetypes, we must examine the primitive thinking processes of the child, in particular that archaic process that goes by the name of symbol formation.

Space does not permit any exhaustive account of the factors that influence early thought processes; amongst the more important are the concrete and predominantly visual nature of early mental presentations; the peculiar nature of those psychic tendencies or mechanisms which regulate unconscious function, in particular the mechanisms of condensation, displacement and identification; the rudimentary nature of early object relations; the predominating influence of early instinctual aims which, sharpened by frustration, leads to a constant projection on to the world of objects of characteristics really appertaining to the subject; and, finally, the influence of repression in maintaining a sharp distinction between the primary processes of the unconscious system and the secondary processes characteristic of the pre-conscious system, which system is in fact unable to expand until the development of word-presentation that follows the acquisition of speech and promotes intellectual activity. Baffling and often incomprehensible as are the products of early thinking they represent quite respectable achievements in concrete thought; indeed in the vast majority of instances it would be quite unnatural for the infant to think in any other way.

Admittedly it is never possible to observe these early products of unconscious thinking in pure form. Even in dream formation and in schizophrenic thinking the influence of the pre-conscious system on the final ideational representation is quite obvious. The latent content of a dream can only be recognized after it has been disentangled from a maze of (pre-)conscious associations. Indeed a good deal of the intellectual obscurity of the dream is a direct consequence of the intrusion during sleep of primary processes into the field of the pre-conscious. The schizophrenic seeks to

regain his lost world of objects by playing with words, and dramatizing his word plays in action.

To return to the Jungian archetypes; the first and most striking feature of these products is the high degree of pre-conscious elaboration present in these largely pictorial representations. When Jung maintained that myth formations were 'elaborated' products, he unwittingly laid his concept of the collective archetype open to damaging criticism. For after a preliminary period when the child's most compelling needs are attended to by parents with a minimum of purposive activity on its own part, it is difficult to think of any instinctual contingency (need) that would not be interpreted by the child's mind in terms of its own experience, that is to say, thought of in terms of its current *Weltanschauung* which by the age of two includes a great deal of primitive wishful thinking and speculation. Also it must be remembered that in the embryonic phases of mental development no accurate sense of time exists even in the pre-conscious system (the unconscious is in any case timeless). The infant passes through many eternities before its rudimentary reality sense is organized and during those endless epochs its mental activity waxes and wanes in accordance with the stress of need. Small wonder then if its earliest (pre-conscious) speculative systems are stamped with the hallmark of unconscious thinking, that, for example, what the adult regards as a peculiar form of symbolism is to the child matter of fact.

To reduce all this to more concrete terms: although up to the age of two the existence of 'collective archetypes' can neither be proved nor disproved, we are entitled to estimate the plausibility of such assumptions by reference to the forms of individual thinking, both conscious and unconscious, existing from the age of two onwards. Is it, for example, likely that the two-year-old's reactions to the objects of its instincts are influenced mainly by the collective archetype of the eternal feminine or mainly by 'eternities' of experience of instinctual need and gratification, pleasure and pain, and by the correlation of these experiences with the perception and gradual recognition of the chiefly maternal 'objects' which cater for and therefore appear responsible for its well- or ill-being both physical and mental. Is it likely that the number two or three or four, or for that matter, five, six or seven obtains its archetypical significance from the impinging c

inherited psychic predisposition on the (pre-) conscious system; or it likely that the early significance of numbers which cannot in any case develop until the infant has attained the transitional period that lies between mainly visual and mainly auditory thinking, by which time the (pre-)conscious system is already well advanced, is due to the influence of the 'individual' unconscious system on early pre-conscious thinking? On questions of this sort a good deal of evidence has been collected. We know, for example, that by the time the child is thumbing its first picture book and learning that 'b' stands for 'ball' it has already invested the letters of the alphabet with symbolic significance, that, for example, in its mind 'b' may symbolize its mother and 'd' its father: and there is overwhelming evidence that behind this symbolism lies a wealth of individual experience of both father and mother, experience of the primitive relations between subject and object that has undergone extensive if, to the adult, peculiar organization.

To these individual factors we shall have occasion to return. In the meantime it may be said not only that many Jungian archetypes are capable of adequate explanation in terms of purely individual thought but also that so long as we have not fully explored the early forms of individual thinking, the validity and universality of the collective archetype is under strong suspicion. It is, of course, still arguable that inherited psychic predispositions express themselves through whatever form of individual organization may have developed; but that is not the same thing as a collective archetype in Jung's sense of the term. And in any case the law of economy of hypothesis would demand that the term should be applied only to such products as cannot be satisfactorily accounted for in terms of individual development.

As a matter of interest it was through the application of this criterion that Freud was originally led to formulate some tentative views regarding the inheritance of certain racial psychic dispositions and more specifically of the inheritance of racial memory traces, views which have led many psychologists to the erroneous conclusion that in his latter days Freud found himself nearer to the Jungian concept of the Collective Unconscious. This was far from being the case. Freud was always interested in the primitive factors that play a part in inducing and regulating mental activities. This was a natural outcome of his discovery of the

unconscious system and of the primitive instincts and mechanisms that respectively activate and govern that system. To these concepts he added the corollary of an 'instinctual disposition' capable of giving rise to characteristic mental patterns either positive (the result of inherent instinctual tendencies or aims) or reactive (the result of the impact of these tendencies on characteristic social restrictions). And it may be noted in passing that he saw no particular advantage in calling these constitutional dispositions 'collective', for, as he remarked 'the content of the unconscious is in any case collective, a general possession of mankind'. In other words the qualifying term adds nothing to our information.

Freud was also keenly interested in certain clinical types found particularly amongst the hysterical and obsessional neuroses suggesting the existence of an *archaic* disposition and even the possibility of inherited mental residues. The most striking example in his view, was that primitive character type manifesting a violent degree of ambivalence.<sup>1</sup> This he at first regarded as evidence of persisting disposition, i.e., of reaction traits once characteristic of primitive man. Following this idea he proceeded to correlate neurotic symptoms with the persistence of reactions that were universal in primeval times. In *Totem and Tabu* (1912) he first drew attention to the correspondence existing between certain neurotic (obsessional) rituals and the totemistic observances followed by primitive tribes. From that time onward he maintained that religious phenomena were to be understood only on the model of neurotic symptoms as a return of long-forgotten important happenings in the primeval history of the human family. This view he supported from the observation that the unconscious sexual anxieties of children were accompanied by reactions which seem unreasonable in the individual (cf. infantile phobias of being eaten or castrated and phantasies of a 'prime scene' of sadistic coitus between the parents during which the child's life and sexual organs are felt to be endangered). In the absence of individual traumatic experiences these, he maintained, can only be understood phylogenetically. In *Moses and Monotheism* (1939) he returned to the subject. Studying the history of mass-traditions he again concluded that in the development of religious phenomena a state of affairs exists corresponding to the

<sup>1</sup> The coexistence or fusion of opposing tendencies, e.g., of love and hate usually vented on the objects of instincts.

'return of the repressed' observed in individual neuroses; and he asserted that 'the archaic heritage of mankind includes not only archaic dispositions but also ideational contents, memory traces of the experience of former generations'. Freud realized fully that the present attitude of biological science rejects the idea of acquired qualities being transmitted to descendants. Nothing daunted by this opposition, he maintained that he was unable to picture biological development without taking this into account.

In further support of the idea of an archaic heritage of ideational content representing phylogenetic 'fragments', Freud adduced the case of symbolism. This he regarded as an archaic inheritance from the time when primitive man painfully acquired the power of speech. He admitted nevertheless that symbolism was capable of another explanation, namely, that symbols are thought connexions between ideas formed during the historical development of speech which have to be repeated every time the individual passes through his infantile development, implying thereby that only the thought disposition was inherited. In the case of mass-psychology, however, he was definitely of the opinion that mental residues of primeval times need only to be awakened not reacquired.

For the moment we are not concerned with the accuracy or validity of these views. As has been indicated, until the child is able to communicate ideas (i.e. after the age of two years) we have no means of testing by interpretation the accuracy of any theory regarding the nature of unconscious content. We can neither prove nor disprove the inheritance of psychic memory traces. All we can say is that with increasing understanding (drawn of course from a number of collateral sources) of the mental function of two year olds we shall in all probability find that many apparently unreasonable infantile reactions are amply accounted for without assuming more than the inheritance of instinctual dispositions, of sensitiveness of psychic reaction and of thought dispositions. The immediate issue is quite otherwise, namely, whether these views of Freud represent an acceptance on his part of Jung's concept of the Collective Unconscious and of its content, meaning and function. For naturally acceptance of constitutional (innate) actors is not peculiar either to Jung or to Freud.

The simplest answer is that the analogy Freud drew between on the one hand neurotic symptom formations occurring in the

individual and on the other religious phenomena appearing in the mass, and the correlations he made between both of these manifestations and traumatic events occurring in the primeval history of man, were entirely consonant with his own theories of individual mental development and function, theories which Jung had both explicitly and implicitly rejected, and which he continues to reject even when, by using Freudian terminology in a non-Freudian sense and by occasional suggestions that Freud's view might be right for some people sometimes, he appears to suggest condescendingly that he is not totally opposed to Freudian conceptions. Following his correlation of neurotic reactions with the occurrence of early psychic traumata acting on a sensitive constitution, Freud maintained that the inherited phylogenetic fragments referred only to events of catastrophic (traumatic) significance occurring in primeval times and concerned, not with allegorical abstractions, but with the concrete development of the human family. The events in question represented a combination of sexual and aggressive elements, e.g., the murder of the primal father, the development of a taboo on incest, etc., which in one way or another were associated with serious threats to the survival of man. The effect of these traumata varied quantitatively and also in accordance with environmental stresses, and was enhanced by the factor of summation, i.e., the situations were repeated over centuries of human experience. In fact Freud drew an exact parallel between the primeval conditions inducing racial traumata and the psychic and environmental conditions giving rise to infantile neuroses.

Similarly the conditions giving rise to symbol formation were strictly limited. Although the number of symbols runs into thousands, the unconscious ideas represented in symbols are confined to a small number of primitive interests concerning the subject's own body, family figures and the phenomena of birth, sexuality and death: by far the greatest number are sexual. They are based on primitive identifications, represent a compromise between the repressed and repressing tendencies, are always concrete and represent regressions to simpler forms of apprehension. Moreover the track of true symbolism is a one-way track from the unconscious to the pre-conscious. Thus while the phallus is symbolized by a snake, the snake is never symbolized by the phallus. Contrary to the views held by Jung the symbol

regarded not as a concrete representation of an abstract idea but as a concrete representation of a more inaccessible idea, i.e., the snake represents the phallus not just power, virility or sexuality.<sup>1</sup> Nor is there any 'higher' idea implicit in the symbolism; on the contrary the unconscious derivatives present in the symbol formation act as an obstacle to the development of more realistic representations. Whether Freud's view that symbols represent phylogenetic traces is accurate or whether, as many Freudian analysts prefer to think, symbols are re-created in the course of individual development the fact remains that there is no resemblance between these formations and the mystical representations of the Collective Unconscious described by Jung as archetypes.

But the most convincing evidence that no approximation of concepts occurred to bridge the gulf between Freudian and Jungian systems lies in the fact that despite Freud's obvious interest in the psycho-biological aspects of the constitutional factor, these were at all times subordinated to his concern with the unconscious aspects of individual development. The whole structure of Freudian metapsychology is unaffected by his incursion into the region of phylogenetic speculation. Nor is there a vestige of truth in the suggestion that in formulating the concept of the Id, Freud laid the foundation for a *rapprochement* with Jungian systems. On the contrary the concept of the Id strengthened immeasurably Freud's outline of the mental apparatus and led to the development of an ego-psychology in which the complications of early mental development could be adequately represented. All primary instincts start in the Id from which the Ego itself develops. As a result of Ego exertions, part of the Id can be raised to the pre-conscious level. Other parts are not so raised and remain to form the true unconscious. Should Id charges threaten the security of the Ego, even those parts that have secured preconscious representation can once more be lowered to Id levels by repression. Traumata tend to remain at unconscious levels and if reactivated are subject to repression. Finally the constitutional factor operates through the Id towards the Ego. By establishing the Id-concept Freud was able to preserve and strengthen the elaborate series of discoveries regarding the unconscious development of the

<sup>1</sup> By far the most weighty and authoritative account of symbolism is given by Ernest Jones in his article 'The Theory of Symbolism' (*Papers in Psycho-analysis*, 1937).

*individual* which constitute his unparalleled contribution to mental science.

And here I think we may add to the practical criteria of assessment outlined earlier. A satisfactory psychological system must be able not only to account for the complications of mental development: it must hang together. If it is not to be dismissed as a series of improvisations it must be systematic. Save where the data of observation indicate the existence of contradictions inherent in mental functioning, it must not contain too many contradictions. And finally it must be able to describe a hierarchy of functions in keeping with the known psycho-biological status of man. In summing up the structural aspects of Jung's psychological systems, we are entitled therefore to ask whether they hang together, whether they involve too many contradictions and whether in fact they have psycho-biological value.

The last of these criteria is by far the most fundamental. Whether they know it or not dynamic psychologists have saddled themselves with weighty responsibilities. Either explicitly or implicitly they have committed themselves to the view that the structure of mind arises from the psycho-biological need to regulate mental forces, indicating thereby that the overriding factor in mental activity is a dynamic one. In this respect the problem of the dynamic psychologist is identical with that of humanity, namely, to discover ways and means whereby primitive forces can be regulated without damaging man's capacity to adapt to his natural surroundings or to the social environment he has created through his group activities. Whatever theories of mental development and function the dynamic psychologist may advance must not violate his central hypothesis that the most powerful of all mental institutions is that which harbours man's instinctual forces. Obviously it would be inconsistent with this hypothesis to maintain at the same time that superficial institutions or mental instruments or functions can bring about spontaneously profound changes in the deepest unconscious systems. The dynamic psychologist cannot have it both ways.

Now it is only fair to Jung to record that at the outset of his psychological career he was an enthusiastic dynamic psychologist.

In point of fact his first direct contact with unconscious psychology was made some twelve years *after* Freud had discovered the unconscious and had described his theory of neuroses and of dream formation. Jung, who was then working at Burghölzli as first assistant to Bleuler, took part under Bleuler's direction in a team investigation intended to test Freud's theories, in particular the existence of infantile sexuality. The late Dr. Brill of New York who ranked high amongst clinical psychologists as a man of scientific integrity has described how on his arrival at Zürich in 1907 he found that the staff had been enthusiastically engaged in this work for about a year.<sup>1</sup> In the light of Jung's later defection, Brill's comments on Jung's attitude are of some significance: 'Jung was the first assistant and at the same time a very ardent and pugnacious Freudian', '... (he) gave the impression that he was fully convinced of everything (Freudian)', '... you could not express any doubt about Freud's views without arousing his ire'.

To the clinical psychologist it is not altogether surprising therefore to find that within a few years Jung recanted his Freudian views and devoted his professional life to the promulgation of theories and systems which had they been accurate would have completely disembowelled the Freudian system. For despite Jung's occasional condescending references to the limited applicability of Freudian theories, his own system is persistently if not consistently anti-Freudian. Indeed it is characteristic of Freudian chismatics that they do not rest content until they have produced a theoretical structure which denies the validity of the most fundamental of Freud's discoveries, at the same time using Freudian terminology in a way that divests it of its original meaning and so bamboozles the unoriented reader. There are, of course, two ways of supplanting Freudian theories. The less common is to elaborate systems which imply that Freud was superficial: the other and more common technique is to reinforce the authority of those *conscious* psychologies whose sway Freud had so uncompromisingly disturbed. Jung elected to follow both plans.

Actually his claim to be regarded as a dynamic psychologist now rests on a cult of the Collective Unconscious. This he regards as the most important of his psychic systems: its unguarded emergence can, he maintains, cause the gravest psychotic

<sup>1</sup> *Psycho-analytic Psychiatry*. 1948.

disorders; in the sense of giving rise to specific content it has a fixed organization; it is the repository of the wisdom of the past which is apparently wiser than anything ego-consciousness can produce unaided, it is a 'dreamer of age-old dreams', an 'incomparable prognosticator' and 'could be personified as an almost (*sic*) immortal human being with characteristics of both sexes transcending youth and age, birth and death . . . .' In language of this sort Jung proclaims himself not only a dynamic psychologist but a dynamic psychologist with a unique perception of the 'dark' and 'deep' forces that influence human affairs. Yet it is precisely by his undisciplined use of language that Jung gives a clue to the fundamental flaw in his psychological reasoning. Whoever anthropomorphizes the dynamic unconscious has failed to distinguish between primary and secondary mental processes and has thereby obliterated the distinction between unconscious and pre-conscious systems. Indeed he has done more; he has paved the way for an introduction into the unconscious system of concepts that are valid only for ego-consciousness. And so almost in the same moment as he proclaims himself a champion of a unique dynamic unconscious Jung reveals himself in his true colours as a conventional almost academic conscious psychologist. Once he has outlined the Collective Unconscious and postulated its immeasurable force, his main concern is to establish that the relation of this powerful system to the conscious system is that of a mutual improvement association. The Collective Unconscious it would appear, ripens however slowly with experience; a compensatory relation exists between the conscious and the unconscious: the existence of one set of attitudes in the conscious system calls out or is balanced by an antithetical set in the Collective Unconscious: inferior functions that have been neglected by ego-consciousness sink into the unconscious where, reinforcing functions that have never been developed, they exert an influence on the conscious system that is beyond the control of will. 'The complementary or compensatory functions to each other is', say Jacobi, 'a law inherent in the structure of the psyche.' And again 'If consciousness is extraverted, the unconscious is introverted (*sic*), and conversely.' And despite a good deal of lip-service to generalizations such as that the conscious system arises from the matrix of the unconscious, Jung's whole outline of the development of the individual substitutes for an evolutionary approach

from unconscious to conscious and a sharp differentiation of an originally dynamic unconscious from later structural formations, a close system of interrelations, compensations, balances and antitheses which cut the ground from that fundamental distinction.

Seeking for a Jungian concept which at the same time illustrates the flattening out of distinctions between his unconscious and his conscious systems, brings into prominence the contradictions inherent in his psychological thinking and focuses attention on its main flaw, one cannot do better than choose the *anima* and *animus(-i)*. For quite frankly it is impossible to operate with such metapsychologically nebulous concepts as the *shadow*, nor indeed with any concept that requires for its elucidation the use of terms such as 'light' and 'dark', the 'light side' and the 'dark side', 'this side' and 'the other side', 'the shadow side' and the like. The *anima(-us,-i)* concept is after all not only a focal point in the Jungian collective unconscious it is an essential part of his total system; it has been expounded at great length by Jung and his followers; and, apart from difficulties arising from his use of the term as a synonym for the Jungian 'soul', it is possible to subject it to a partial examination.

Now it may be noted that, although Jung seeks to correlate the concepts of the *anima* and *animus* with the transmission of genes and therefore with the problem of bisexuality, this biological consideration is not consistently applied and gives place to a maze of e.g. so-called 'contra-sexual' relationships. On the assumption that unconscious and conscious relations are governed by opposites, the *anima(-us, -i)* is rather ingeniously represented as the 'contra-sexual position' of the individual, a kind of 'minority' representation, in the case of man of his feminine side, in the case of woman of her masculine side or tendencies. It is also, however, a precipitate of *all* human experience pertaining to the 'other' sex. But here as elsewhere in Jung's writings it may be noted that the sexual factor is definitely not nasty. The *anima(-us, -i)*, represents not crude sexual elements but rather what might be called *tertiary* sexual characteristics, refined and elevated to an archetypical plane from which nevertheless it may on occasion exercise sufficiently potent influence to disrupt the psyche. In general the *anima* is viewed as the mysterious, veiled, female form, a kind of idealized, sometimes admonitory figure of the type, Jung suggests,

of Dante's 'Beatrice' or Rider Haggard's 'She'; sometimes she is a poor weak woman who may in dreams get mixed up with a wife image, or, in waking life, be projected on a real woman with unfortunate results. The *animi* of the woman, for as we have seen women being monogamous have a plurality of *animi*, bear a strong likeness to father images or Wise Old Men. Now here we are plunged into all possible sorts of confusion; for if this plurality of figures represent 'objects' as would appear from their polygamous function why are they not women rather than 'father-figures'? Granted that by Jung's refined categories the masculine side of a woman represents only her 'higher' potentialities, e.g., fitness for a career or for 'inner' development we may still ask why is not this unconscious masculine side homosexual? Surely this would fit in with the compensating relation existing between the *animus* and the conscious personality.<sup>1</sup>

But the confusion does not end here. According to Jung, and here Dr. G. Adler lends his authoritative support, the unconscious is feminine, the conscious masculine, irrespective of the sex of the individual: '... the feminine and masculine psychic powers, the unconscious and conscious poles of the personality' says Adler: 'are united in a psychic totality to which—to use the language of alchemy—we could apply the symbol of the hermaphrodite'. Moreover thinking is masculine, feeling is feminine. The Inferior Function being unconscious must be feminine: Superior Functions masculine; 'Eros' (*sic*) is feminine: 'Logos' masculine. The

<sup>1</sup>It is interesting to speculate as to the ultimate fate of the *anima(-us)* concept; for like many of Jung's concepts it appears to exist in a state of flux. At times one gets the impression that it is a favourite plaything which might later on be discarded: at times it appears to drift steadily away from its shaky moorings as a scientific concept, i.e., a 'psychic partial-system' personifying according to the definition of the moment, affective experiences, the 'contra-sexual' or the unconscious in general. The drift towards occult thought is best illustrated in Jung's commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower* of *Lü Tzü*. Jung accepts Wilhelm's translation of the word *hun* as *animus* and of *p'o* as *anima*. The *animus*, according to *Lü Tzü*, 'lives in the daytime in the eyes; at night it houses in the liver. When living in the eyes it sees; when housing itself in the liver, it dreams.' Here Jung comments, 'none the less I had very important reasons for choosing the expression *logos* for a man's mental essence: his clarity of consciousness and reason'. Regarding *p'o*, he remarks 'Careful investigation has shewn that the affective character in a man has feminine traits. From this psychological fact comes the Chinese teaching of the *p'o*-soul, as well as my concept of the *anima*'.

Soul, everybody's soul, is feminine. Yet the man's shadow which is mainly an unconscious personality is masculine: the shadow of woman feminine. It is tempting to join in this fun. The Unconscious being older and more comprehensive than the conscious should be superior and therefore one might think masculine. The anima can be the dream representative of man's unconscious feminine side. But surely every man has some conscious glimmer of his feminine side; if so, this should be reversed to masculine in the unconscious. If the conscious is masculine and the unconscious feminine, then by the Jungian rule of contraries, the anima should oppose the conscious. But she only represents the 'sexual minority', and should therefore appear as a masculine figure in an otherwise feminine unconscious. Or again, suppose a man's Inferior Function to be the Thinking Function: as inferior and unconscious it is *ex hypothesi* feminine. But thinking, we are told, is masculine. At what point does this metamorphosis take place?

It would be easy to account for these confusions by saying that they are due in part to Jung's doting attitude to alchemy and oriental occultism, in part to a desire to present mystical ideas in a 'modern' scientific guise; witness his references to genes. And no doubt the absurdities are also due to some extent to the constant interference of random thinking. More significant, however, are the specific tendencies expressed by the structure of the Jungian system. Two in particular may be singled out. By establishing a series of intimate, spontaneously developed and *reciprocal* relationships between structures of the unconscious and of the conscious, Jung in effect obliterates the dynamic distinction between the two systems; and by his emphasis on the archetypical aspects of the Collective Unconscious, he deliberately sidesteps the major problem of infantile sexuality and its profound influence on mental development. This is too big a price to pay for the questionable benefits of a drawing-room version of psychic development.

All of which leads to a final psycho-biological consideration. Reviewing the archetypical aspects of the anima one cannot help wondering why a structure that has such terrifying potentiality is represented as being so polite, platonic and Tennysonian. And, going further, we may inquire why the whole content of the Collective Unconscious is so wise, wonderful and precious. Why is the 'old' so venerable? Above all, why is it so experienced? A prehistoric human skull reposing in a museum is no doubt

enormously old. It may even be enormously interesting. But it is not particularly venerable. In point of fact the former contents of the skull, or, to speak in psychological terms, the mind of that prehistoric man must have been immeasurably younger than the mind of modern man. It must indeed have had less racial unconscious to provide it with 'wisdom'. The racial unconscious is no more old than a baby is old. It's conceivably 'transmissible' tendencies can hardly be supposed to grow at all. How can an inherited *tendency* acquire wisdom and experience? We cannot talk of wisdom until instinctual urges and unconscious content have been refracted through the reality layers of the (pre-)conscious system. Wisdom grows with the development of conceptual forms which depend in turn on word-formation and the power of speech, faculties which are associated mainly with the pre-conscious function. So far from being particularly wise the archetypes are of a predominantly superstitious and animistic nature. The forms of symbolism are also archaic, naïve and from the point of view of reality function profoundly obscurantist. Indeed we are still struggling with some of the legacies of anxiety, cruelty and cowardice left us by our primitive forefathers. No doubt we have lost the faculty of throwing coco-nuts from tree-tops with precision, but our experience is nevertheless incomparably greater than that of our simian ancestors.

The truth appears to be that Jung in pursuance of his *witting* or *unwitting* policy of levelling distinctions between the unconscious and the conscious confuses archetypes with traditions. His wholistic system of structural concepts illustrates the dangers of thinking of the psyche in symbolical terms. Indeed it could be maintained that the concept of a wise and venerable Collective Unconscious owed its development to the persistence of a myth. For although it would not be quite accurate to say that Jung's account of its virtues and powers indicates his belief in the myth of a Golden Age of Man, there is some reason to think that the concept of the Collective Unconscious resuscitates that sentimental derivative of ancestor worship, the Myth of the Noble Savage.

[To be continued]

*Part II will cover Jung's concept of the libido, his mental mechanisms, character types, the Jungian dream, Jungian theories of neurosis, Jung's social, religious and political ideas.*

ANTONIA WHITE

## THE RICH WOMAN

THE first time I saw Belle Chandler was a few weeks before my marriage to her husband's nephew, Harry Grayle.

I had heard a certain amount about Belle before I met her. Harry's youngest uncle Conway Chandler (he was only thirty at the time of our wedding) was her third and richest husband. No one knew her exact age. Harry's mother said to me once: 'Belle certainly doesn't look her years whatever they are. And she's one of those women who have an uncanny power over men. If anything happened to Con, I've no doubt she could replace him.'

I asked what had happened to Mrs. Chandler's first two husbands.

'One's still alive. He must be quite an old man now. The other died but she didn't wait to be a widow. She left the first or the second and the second for Con. Belle seems to get a new lease of life with each divorce. The fact remains, she's too old to give Con an heir. I fancy it shakes her a little. The last time I saw them together I had the notion she was riding him on a shade too tight a rein.'

When I showed the note in large, decorative, slightly back-handed writing, inviting me to come down to Malisfont with Harry, Lady Grayle's forehead puckered.

'I wonder what Belle's after,' she said. 'If I didn't know that Harry bores her, I'd say "Laura, my dear, look out".'

'Even though he's her nephew by marriage?'

'She likes to keep in practice. You may even have to look out for yourself. She can't bear to leave anything just as she finds it, whether it's a house or a human being.'

Then she added, in the public voice the family used when they mentioned her, 'You'll be charmed with her, of course—she's a most fascinating woman.'

'Malisfont's a queer house,' Harry said, as the car slithered slowly between the tall hedges of the drive. 'I don't mean haunted. Belle wouldn't stand for ghosts. She can't bear anything gloomy.'

'This drive's gloomy enough,' I pointed out. 'So were those

sham Gothic lodges. She might at least have taken the gratings off the windows.'

Harry smiled, 'Wait till you see the dungeons—genuine Victorian dungeons. Belle grows orchids in 'em. Malisfont is a "folly", really. The old boy who built it couldn't bear people to see him. There's a mile and a half of cloisters in this park; put up so that he could take exercise without being spied on. Everyone said Belle was crazy herself to make Uncle Con buy the place. But she adores it. She's been here over two years. Must be a record for her.'

'Your mother said she was always moving.'

'It's a mania with her. She buys houses, guts them, completely redoes them. Then, as soon as she's made a place absolutely marvellous, she gets sick of it and wants a new one. Her other husbands hadn't long enough purses to stand the strain. Luckily Con has.'

'Doesn't he get restive?'

'No. He's just as bad in his own way. Can't stick to anything long. Mamma says he's become a millionaire out of sheer boredom. He can't stop inventing. He's been inventing new types of engine ever since he was eighteen. Car, yacht, plane—it's all one to him. And they're all winners!'

'What's he like?'

'Good-looking chap. All the Mr. Belles have been that. Otherwise . . . well . . . if you didn't know he was a genius, you might think his mind had stopped somewhere around thirteen. Mad on every new game and gadget that comes out. Can't be still a moment. Mealtimes are agony to him. He bolts his food like a schoolboy so he's always finished first. Then he'll fish something out of his pocket and start jiggering with it. A Chinese puzzle or a bit of string to tie knots in. He liked me when I was a kid . . . it's a sin Belle can't produce some for him . . . but men bore him unless they're mechanics or speed-racing johnnies.'

'What about women?'

'Oh, he likes *them* all right. Or did. "Many and often" was his motto before he married. But Belle's got him hypnotized. He never even glances aside—though she's old enough to be his mother.'

'Doesn't want to or daren't?'

'Genuinely doesn't want to, it seems. There are rumours they have rows, of course. But no one's ever caught them at it.'

It was not only because I was impatient to see the Chandlers that the drive seemed interminable. Harry had slowed the car down till we were scarcely moving.

'I didn't know you *could* drive so slowly.'

He said with unexpected fierceness:

'I'd drive fast enough if we were going away from this rotten house.'

'Harry, what *is* wrong with Malisfont?'

He speeded up a little and answered without looking at me:

'Goodness knows. Nothing probably. Certainly nothing to do with the old maniac and his dungeons and cloisters. Anyway, side it's as cheerful as can be. Almost too cheerful if you ask me. That's Belle again. She's a Christian Scientist, you know. Says gliness comes from evil thoughts and so on.'

'She doesn't feel the old maniac left the wrong kind of atmosphere?'

'That's the funny thing. Usually she simply tears a house to pieces before she'll live in it. But except for paint and so on, she hasn't altered Malisfont. Yet it's certainly *her* house now. I can't imagine anyone daring to live there after her.'

He was silent for a moment. Then suddenly he turned a puzzled face to me.

'You know, Laura, Malisfont's all right and Belle's all right. But I'm damned if I like the two of them together.'

We slid round a bend. The hedges on either side came to an abrupt full stop with a pillar and there was the great house with its towers and terraces and its sweep of lawn dotted with cedars. Two projecting arms of the cloisters enclosed it like the walls of a medieval city, reflecting their red bricks and grey flints in a moat still as a misted looking-glass. It was at once impressive and grotesque: a red and grey neo-Gothic castle with crenellated battlements and cross-bow windows in its turrets. The iron-studded door in the porch was open and in the doorway stood Belle Chandler.

I saw a tall woman: full, supple and erect, wearing a knitted dress with a fur scarf flung over her shoulders. She bent her head down, smiling, more as if to expose her face to me than to study mine. I saw a wide mouth with carved edges like an Egyptian statue's, hazel eyes slanting up to the temples, a turned-up nose with sensual nostrils and dark brown hair with a single streak of

white. Her make-up was subdued but deliberate; the artifice seemed as natural to her skin as the bloom on an apricot. But I cannot describe Belle with my eyes only. She affected all my senses. I was simultaneously aware of her rose-geranium scent, a peculiar hum in her voice like that of a stringed instrument and the firm, elastic texture of her flesh. When she kissed me, I had the shivering sensation in the roof of my mouth I always have when an animal licks me.

She held my arm close against her side as we passed into the great hall. The stained glass windows and vaulted roof gave it the air of a church turned to secular uses. There was even an organ loft at one end. At the other was a low dais on which stood an open grand piano massed round with pots of hydrangeas. Chairs and sofas covered with gay chintz were scattered about; beautiful rugs made islands on the stone floor; the silver on the tea-table winked in the glow of a huge log fire in front of which a Clumber was dozing. Yet, in spite of all this opulent brightness, the effect was disquieting.

I remembered Harry's 'Almost too cheerful' and was seized with a sudden need to exchange a word or a look with him. If I had dared, I would have slipped my arm out of Belle's but that soft pressure was inexorable. I could only turn my head in his direction. He was but a few steps behind us yet I had the impression that he was as remote as the friend on the quay where one's ship puts out from land.

'Come and take your things off,' said Belle. 'I hope—yes, believe—you'll like the room I've chosen for you.'

I remember nothing she said as, linked close, we walked along white-walled passages and climbed broad shallow stairs. I remember the feel of her body, heavy yet lithe, and how I instinctively adapted my movements to hers as if we were dancing together. I remember, too, how her low-pitched voice with its hummin' overtone seemed to invest the usual hostess chatter with some private meaning. She drawled a little, as if she caressed each word before she let it go. When she spoke, her wide, finely-cut lips hardly changed their contours but her brows and eyelids were at the time in play. The short thick lashes fluttered like wings and deep creases came and went, at the corners of her eyes. In most women, the lower part of the face decays first, but there were no lines round Belle's mouth and the chin and the full round neck.

ere as firm as a statue's. Only about the eyes had the skin lost its silience and parched into fine wrinkles.

She drew my attention to this or that detail of the house and I did mechanically: 'Yes . . . wonderful', or 'I love that'. I was too conscious of her presence to have more than a vague impression of space and whiteness, of garlanded cornices, blue Ming vases and tubs of flowering plants. The only thing of which I was acutely aware was the smell of the house; a compound of peat, wood-smoke, rose-geranium and the faintest possible hint of mould.

All this time, beyond a careless greeting at the door, Belle had taken no notice of Harry. He hung always a little behind us as we trudged and paused. When at last we reached the door of my room, she said over her shoulder:

'You've got your usual room, Harry. Go down to the hall when you're ready. Con's probably in by now.'

It was a beautiful room into which she drew me, shutting the door behind us with a definite air of exclusion. I half expected that she was going to kiss me again. Instead she disengaged her arm and moved away, saying:

'Rather a nice view, isn't it?'

'Yes, lovely,' I felt suddenly lost and foolish.

The three tall windows with their *toile de Jouy* curtains looked over the terrace, moat and park to wooded hills.

'I quite enjoyed furnishing it. Yet I'm not absolutely satisfied. Take a good look and tell me what you think. You've got a fresh eye.'

There were presses and chests of silvery-brown wood, carved with fruit and flowers, and a mirror supported by dolphins. The bed, too, was carved in elegant swags touched here and there with faded gilt. The old silk rugs seemed to glow and change colour in their own inner light. The walls were a very pale grey and the only modern things in the room, vast plump arm-chairs covered in a rather unusual grey chintz with a scribbled yellow pattern, fitted surprisingly well into their setting. There was nothing to recall Malisfont's odd façade but the mock Gothic windows and the stone fireplace in which logs were burning.

I thought the room beautiful and said so. As if she had not heard, she was no longer interested, Belle drawled:

'The logs are mainly for show. I always have central heating as well. I loathe cold, don't you? And discomfort of any kind.'

I had never seen such luxury before and wanted to say so. But I was struck with such shyness that I might have been twelve instead of nineteen.

'Perhaps it's the chintz,' she said suddenly. 'I had it made to my own design. But they took such ages over it. By the time the stuff arrived, I'd lost interest.'

Finding nothing to say, I nodded, with what I hoped was a sophisticated smile, and spread out my fingers to the fire. Belle swooped towards me and seized both my hands.

'What a bitter little smile, Laura. One would think you were disillusioned already. And you're only at the beginning. Life should be so wonderful for you of all people.'

I looked into her eyes, changeable eyes of no definable colour, diminished by age yet brilliant between the short dark lashes.

'Why for me specially?' Shyness made my voice sound like a pert school-girl's.

She smiled.

'You're sensitive. You want the finest and best as I do. You haven't quite come to life yet, Laura, have you? You'll be lovely, darling, when you're really happy.'

Without meaning to, I blurted out:

'Never, never as lovely as you,' and felt myself turn scarlet. Belle gave a contented laugh and patted my cheek with a touch light as a kitten's paw.

'I know how to make myself happy,' she said. 'I'll teach you if you'll let me.'

She slipped my coat from my shoulders and I stood there very conscious of my cheap ready-made suit.

'That green is good with your eyes,' she said kindly. 'How should I adore to design clothes for you. Of course you've got most of your trousseau by now.'

'What there is of it,' I said, feeling suddenly enough at ease to smile at her.

She clasped her hands in front of her like a pleading child.

'Let's go shopping together. Yes, darling, *please*. It would be such a treat for me. It's such fun having a pretty young thing to dress.'

'It's angelic of you, Mrs. Conway. But really, I don't . . .'

'Not Mrs. Conway,' she interrupted. 'I want you to call me by my real name.'

'But really, Belle . . .' I could get no further.

She laughed and slipped her arm under mine again.

'That's settled. I usually get what I want, you know. That's because I always want lovely things. I suppose we'd better go back to those men. What a bore! I shouldn't say that to you, should I? Are you madly, madly in love? Or don't you know yet? Poor Harry. Anyone can see you've bewitched him.'

She drew my arm against her side and laughed again.

'I never thought Harry and I would have anything in common,' she said.

As we drew near the great hall I was puzzled by a strange noise, the heavy irregular hammering of wood on stone.

'Con and his latest toy,' Belle said: 'Infants, aren't they?'

Harry was standing by the fire with his hands in his pockets, clinking the fat Clumber with his foot. He had an abandoned look. The other man in the hall took no notice of us. His handsome dark face was set in a scowl of concentration as he hopped about the one floor on a pogo stick.

We spent four days at Malisfont. Often, for hours at a time, I did not see Belle. But I was conscious of her at every moment, most of all when I was alone with Harry. Each time we met again, she gave me a peculiar look and smile as if our intimacy had grown in absence. Once she took me into her bedroom which was full of white fur rugs and old gilt furniture and opened cupboard after cupboard of clothes. It had never occurred to me that a woman could possess so many. There were shelves heaped with chiffon and satin underclothes, folded as carefully as in a shop; each neat pile covered with a square of handmade lace. There were rows of apparently unworn shoes from brogues that shone like chestnuts to virgin white buckskins and jewelled sandals. One wardrobe was entirely filled with furs: sable, ermine, mink and hinchilla. She made me try on fur coats, parading in them like a mannequin while she watched me with narrowed critical eyes. There was one, a soft squirrel cloak, dyed a tawny gold, which she said was too short for her and the wrong colour but 'might have been made' for me. The furs, like all her possessions, smelt of rose-geranium. Then, suddenly tiring of them, she threw the coats in a heap and produced a great velvet-lined jewel-case. It was like an

Arabian Nights casket: pearls, diamonds, emeralds, sapphires lay in a glittering tangle. She plunged her short white fingers into the heap, pulling out now an emerald bracelet, now a string of diamonds.

'I love jewels,' she said. 'But only to look at and play with. I never wear any of these things now.' All the time I knew Belle I never saw her with anything but the double row of pearls she wore night and day and one square emerald that almost hid her three wedding rings.

She screwed up her eyes at me. 'You ought never to wear anything but pearls, Laura. I can't bear fair women in anything that glitters. Harry should have had more sense than to give you a diamond ring.'

She disentangled a string of pearls and clasped it round my neck. Its light weight against the warmth of my skin was cold as something fresh from the sea. Belle must have seen from my eyes how much I wanted it.

She considered the effect with her head on one side. 'Perfect. Pearls go dull on some women but they won't on you. You've got affinity with them, like me. It's as if your skin were waiting for them to bring it to life.'

I was about to unclasp them but she stopped me.

'Leave them for the moment. I like to see you in them.'

Then she began to tell me how she had acquired every piece of furniture in the room. I tried to listen attentively but I could think of nothing but the pearls. I fancied I could feel them growing warm against my neck. She took me into her bathroom and I patiently admired every detail, the sunk bath with silver taps shaped like mermaids; the Venetian mirror, wreathed in tinted glass flowers, the green mosaic floor, even the eighteenth-century porcelain doorknob.

The gong sounded for luncheon. She put her arm through mine and we walked back through the bedroom. At the door she stopped suddenly:

'Oh, I forgot, darling. My pearls.'

I unclasped them clumsily. I could hardly bear to let them go. She watched me with bright, narrowed eyes. As I put them in her hand, she held them for a moment against her cheek.

'Warm from your skin,' she said smiling. 'Even in this short time you have revived them. You must wear them for me again.'

She went back to her dressing table, took out the jewel box which she had locked, and dropped them in carelessly.

‘A pretty little string, isn’t it? I was very fond of it till Con gave me these. It’s bad for pearls never to be worn.’

Her carved lips had their sweetest smile as she locked the box. The night before we left she came into my bedroom while I was brushing my hair in front of the fire. In honour of Malisfont I was wearing the dressing gown I had made for my trousseau and which I had not meant to wear till my wedding night. It was of peach-coloured satin, trimmed with swansdown, wildly unpractical for the sort of life Harry and I would be leading (we were just fledged from an acting school and hoping to get parts on tour) but after years of school flannel and ripple-cloth, I had a craving for silly, pretty things. And when Belle, after the softest of taps, walked in in a wonderful *négligée* of white velvet and fur, I was glad I was wearing it.

She took the brush from my hands saying, ‘Let me do that’ and began to brush in long, caressing strokes.

‘I’ve wanted to do this ever since I saw you,’ she said. ‘Promise me you’ll never cut your hair. You’ll ruin your appearance. It will get darker, too. You’ll lose this wonderful silvery fairness.’

She brushed on rhythmically, talking in a soft purring voice, till I felt half-hypnotized. Suddenly she said :

‘You’ll come to Malisfont for your honeymoon won’t you?’

I started out of my trance, breaking the rhythm of a brush stroke and murmured something.

‘I’ve spoken to Harry,’ she said. He’s perfectly willing if you’re. Of course Con and I will go away and leave you the place to yourselves.’

I think I tried to protest, but she merely kissed me and said :

‘That’s settled, darling. You have made me so happy. I love Con and so does Malisfont.’

She put her hand under my chin and looked into my eyes.

‘You are a Roman Catholic, aren’t you, Laura? I suppose your church is very strict about . . . well, before marriage and so on?’

‘Yes.’

‘All the better,’ she said with a smile. ‘It makes love so much more wonderful. I am a Scientist: did you know?’

I nodded.

‘It’s all the same thing. We worship the same Spirit. The Spirit

of joy and beauty. Ugliness and sorrow are the only sins. We must never let our thoughts be contaminated by contact with error. For that is what ugliness and suffering and depression are. Even Con is in error sometimes you know. But if our thoughts are happy and beautiful, we shall be happy and beautiful too and *everything* we do will be right.'

She had a serious, exalted look. I felt uneasy yet I could not bring myself to contradict or interrupt.

'Sweet Laura,' she said. Nothing gloomy must ever touch your life. In my philosophy, goodness and beauty are the same.'

I laughed.

'You must be very, very good, Belle.'

She smiled, but still with that air of lofty earnestness.

'We are what we make ourselves, Laura.'

Then her expression changed. Her eyes crinkled at the corners; she was all warmth and pleading, as if for a moment uncertain of her charm.

'I want to ask you a great favour, Laura.'

I was in her power again and would have said 'Yes' to anything.

'I want you to promise that your first child shall be born here.'

I promised, feeling extraordinarily unreal as I did so. Or was it that my own life apart from Malisfont had become unreal? I fell dizzy and suddenly very tired as if all the life had gone out of me. Belle stood up. Her face was transfigured: it seemed to have become at the same time much older and ageless. Some power seemed to inform her whole body; the white dressing-gown might have been a priestess's robe. For the first time I felt frightened of her. I wanted to revoke my promise, to say that I never wanted to come to Malisfont again. But I was too helpless to speak. She moved very softly over to the door, said, almost aloofly: 'Goodnight, dear. And thank you,' and was gone before I could force my lips open.

I slept badly that night, oppressed with dreams. It was one of those nights when one seems to dream with one's eyes open and wakes from one nightmare into another. So to this day I do not know whether or not I had a hallucination. But at one point, as I was lying there, awake as I believe, I felt a weight on my bed and opened my eyes. The room, in the light of the dying log-fire, was perfectly recognizable; my dressing-gown hung over the chair just as I had thrown it off, the dolphin-supported mirror was

silted at the angle I had left it. But sitting on my bed, in the furry white négligée, looking intently at me and smiling, was Belle Chandler. It seemed to me that, without a word on either side, I returned that look until my eyelids grew so heavy that I had to close them. When I opened them again the room was empty.

The next time I saw Malisfont was on my honeymoon. Belle did not come to our wedding, though I saw her once or twice in London during the interval. Harry was right. Away from Malisfont she was oddly diminished; she seemed little more than an elderly, still handsome woman in a mink coat. She took me hopping as she had promised. We spent hours in expensive little places where she made me try on endless hats or asked the mannequins to parade whole series of dresses. She would order things and then countermand them, whispering to me that she was not quite satisfied and we must try elsewhere. In the end she bought me nothing but a veil and a wreath of orange blossom, far more expensive but no prettier than the one I had bought already and an exquisite little scarlet leather bag which did not go with anything possessed.

When Lady Grayle heard of these expeditions she smiled ambiguously.

'Belle has certainly taken you up, my dear. Make hay while the sun shines. If she asks you what you want for a wedding present, don't ask for anything niggling. And for goodness' sake, don't leave it to her.'

I did not admit that this was just what I had done. Nor that Belle, with her sweetest, most enigmatic smile had answered: 'I think it will be something you'll like very much.'

She had decided not to come to the wedding on the plea of getting everything ready for us at Malisfont but she had insisted that the flowers I was to carry should come from her hothouses. When I told Harry this, something in his face made me wish I had refused.

'Damn it,' he said, 'Belle's running us a bit too much for myancy. She might at least have left those to me. Still I can't compete with the Malisfont orchids.'

The flowers did not arrive till the very last moment. Indeed I had already left for the church and the Conway's chauffeur had to pursue us. As I was waiting in a side-chapel he thrust a bouquet of slightly crushed lilies into my hands and a blue leather jewel-case.

The case was not new and my hopes rose. I snapped it open. A note from Belle lay above some object wrapped in silk tissue.

'All my love, darling little Laura. Wear these today for my sake. To me, ivory is *you*. I am so terribly sorry about your lilies. I gathered them and tied them up myself but my naughty old spaniel worried them and there was no time to pick more. But all my thoughts for you are in them.'

The necklace was a perfectly new one of ivory beads such as all the shops were full of that year. They lay in my hand cold and dead-looking as bone.'

'Don't wear them,' my bridesmaid whispered, 'she's not here; she'll never know.'

But, perhaps from cowardice, for I hated them at sight, I did wear them and all through the ceremony I was conscious of their chilly weight on my neck.

As Harry and I drove down to Malisfont, I think the same thought occurred to both of us. Once or twice when the car slowed down, we exchanged looks as if to say, 'Shall we cut and run?' We half expected to find that no preparations had been made for us. But we were wrong. The house was full of flowers and the room where I had slept before, was wonderfully decorated with white camellias and the famous Malisfont orchids. When we came down to dinner we found a small candle-lit table drawn up by a fire laid with Belle's most exquisite glass and silver. There was a touch of fairy-tale extravagance about the whole thing. We were so obviously awaited, so unobtrusively served, so emphatically left to ourselves that we became self-conscious and we had never been before and found ourselves talking with a false brightness as if trying to impress a stranger.

At one point Harry suddenly said:

'Laura, there's something wrong about all this. I feel as if we were acting. Someone's *producing* us. Don't you feel we're speaking lines.'

I tried to say with conviction that probably everyone felt the same on the first night of a honeymoon. But the conviction was not there.

This sense of dreamy unreality did not leave us the next day or the next. The huge empty house, the park, the formal gardens began to oppress us. We felt like prisoners. On the third day, after breakfast, Harry said: 'Let's take one of the cars and get away by

ureselves.' Neither of us had heard the butler come in—he moved ways as quietly as a cat—and it gave us a shock to hear him say: 'I'm so sorry, Sir. Mr. and Mrs. Chandler have taken the Hudson and the Rolls is away being overhauled. There is nothing in the garage but the station van.'

'Then we'll take that,' said Harry impatiently.

'I'm *very* sorry, sir,' said the urbane voice. 'It is in use this morning.'

Harry swore, tugged open the French window and strode out on to the terrace. I would have followed but something restrained me. Perhaps it was the butler's eye. I was desperately anxious to behave as if I had been married a very long time.

I got up and walked through the door he held open for me. I intended to make my way through the house, go out by the front porch and join Harry outside. But as I stepped out into the long white passage I heard something which made my heart miss a beat. Someone was playing the piano in the great hall.

The sound compelled me to follow it to its source. I had no doubt who was playing but I had to see for myself.

She was sitting sideways to me at the piano on the dais. She was dressed in travelling clothes with a little fur toque and a veil. I stood for what seemed several minutes watching her absorbed profile. She was playing idly, without music, staring straight in front of her. At last she turned her head and sent me a smile. Her left hand continued to make chords and arpeggios as she beckoned me with her right.

Her look, as I came closer, was sly and pleading.

'I'm not here, really,' she said. 'Take no notice of me.'

She gave her explanation while her hands continued to move mechanically over the keyboard. She and Con had dashed back—literally for an hour. They were going to Brooklands for some speed-trials. Con wasn't perfectly satisfied with the tuning-up of his car. I knew what Con was, didn't I? There was some bit of fidgeting with the engine he was doing at that moment in the garage. I said it was absurd, if they were as near as Brooklands, not to sleep in their own house.

'And interrupt the lovebirds? Never, darling. Malisfont is *your* house this week. And in any case, Con and I are going north straight from the meeting.'

I began to thank her, clumsily, for all she had done for us. She

smiled, kindly yet a little impatiently, like someone hearing a story they know already.

Suddenly she lifted her hands from the keyboard and opened her arms to me. I felt once again the warmth of the lithe, heavy body, smelt her familiar perfume, was aware of that shivering sensation on my palate.

‘Ah, Laura, Laura. Is it all being wonderful . . . as wonderful as you dreamed?’

I murmured something, I don’t know what. But in that moment I was convinced that she knew as well as I did that it was not being wonderful at all. I was convinced too (though I never had any evidence of this) that she had been at Malisfont all the time.

However, she really did go that day. She summoned Harry and me to watch her drive off with Con. The chauffeur was to follow with the racing car and Con lingered a little, giving him last minute instructions.

Suddenly he hesitated.

‘I’ll drive her myself, Parry. You take Mrs. Chandler.’

Belle swerved round in her seat. Her face in the April sunlight looked suddenly old and mask-like. But her voice was sweet as she said :

‘No, darling. You’re driving me.’

‘All right, Belle,’ he said sullenly. When I had stayed at Malisfont before Conway Chandler had taken practically no notice of me. But now he suddenly stepped up to me and said :

‘I haven’t kissed the bride. Uncle’s privilege, eh, Laura?’

‘Con, are we *never* going to get off?’ Belle’s voice was like the swish of a lash.

He started, but he kissed me all the same. I caught the look he exchanged with Harry before he jumped into the driving seat and it was not one I wish to see again. The car shot forward with a jerk and was swallowed up between the dark hedges of the drive. Probably our rather half-hearted ‘good-bye’ and ‘good luck’ were drowned by the roar of the engine, for neither of them turned a head.

Harry said, ‘I wouldn’t be surprised if he killed her one of these days.’

But it was Con who was killed that very afternoon at Brooklands. We did not hear the news for a day or two. An hour after we saw them off we were on our way to London and before the

vening papers came out we were heading for Cornwall in Harry's old car.

If we thought that by leaving Malisfont we could throw off whatever blight had fallen on us, we were wrong. The village people watched us with friendly irony as we walked up every morning from the sea with arms entwined. But every night, like actors during an interval, we returned to our separate selves.

The summer that followed our wedding was unusually hot. The little house that had seemed so charming when we took it became like a stifling box as one airless day followed another. It was so hot that the water ran warm in the taps and candles bent in their sockets. I was tired and languid in a way that I had never been in my life; it seemed to me I had grown ten years older. I became too apathetic to go round the agents looking for a part and left Harry to go by himself. Often I would sit the whole day in the tiny house we had taken, leaving meals uncleared for hours. Some days I felt too weary even to dress properly but sat about in a dressing-gown with my hair loose and unbrushed.

Harry was first worried, then irritated by the change in me. had no explanation to offer; I knew that physically there was nothing the matter with me. After a time he took to leaving me alone for longer and longer intervals on the excuse that he must meet as many people as possible, if he was ever to get a part. Sometimes I made a scene, nagging him feebly long after I had gained my point simply because I could not summon up enough energy to stop.

When Belle's note inviting me to Malisfont came I felt too indifferent to go. But Harry unexpectedly insisted.

'I've come to the conclusion I loathe Belle,' he said. 'But you ought to go. It'll be cooler down there. The change may do you good. God knows you need something to pull you out of this.'

The lawns at Malisfont were parched and cracked: the grass was bleached; the moat had shrunk and looked stagnant. Leaves had begun to shrivel like paper and were falling already though it was only July. Belle looked at me searchingly when I arrived, stroked my hair and said I was pale. Her manner was kind, but absent: once or twice I caught her looking at me as if she were puzzled or displeased about something.

The first night we dined alone in the small room where Harry and I had had our wedding supper. The French windows were

open for the sake of coolness and Belle sat with her back to them. She was all in black with a length of white tulle twisted carelessly round her thick creamy neck and half-covering the pearls that hung in the deep opening of her dress. I told her she looked like a portrait, sitting there against the background of balustrade and yew hedge and darkening sky. She smiled faintly in the way I remembered so well, hardly moving the outlines of her Egyptian mouth. Then she suddenly narrowed her eyes at me.

‘Is that your *only* evening frock, darling?’

I felt myself flush.

‘Well . . . my only decent one. You said you liked it.’

It was a pink dress I had bought for my trousseau; the most expensive dress I had ever had in my life. I had worn it the first time I had stayed at Malisfont and Belle had said: ‘You look charming—as if you were wearing a great rose upside down.’

‘Did I? I don’t remember. Anyhow I’d forgotten it was such a *vivid* pink. Or is it just because you’re so pale?’

I was anything but pale at that moment. I felt the blood rushing up over my face and neck till the skin seemed as if it would burst.

‘You’ve got fatter, haven’t you, darling?’ she went on. ‘suppose people take it as a sign that married life suits you.’

I could not help it. My eyes suddenly filled with idiotic tears.

Suddenly she put her arm across the table and took my hand.

‘How sensitive you are, Laura,’ she said very softly. ‘I suppose it’s the baby, isn’t it? You must be very, very careful to have right thoughts.’

‘Baby?’ I blurted out. ‘Did you think I was going to have a baby?’

‘Well . . . aren’t you?’

‘No.’

‘Are you *quite* sure?’

‘Yes, positive.’

She took her hand away and said coldly:

‘Stupid of me.’

After dinner we went into the great hall. Belle hardly spoke to me. She sat down at the piano and played absently. Suddenly she got up in the middle of a phrase and left me alone for a long time: I fancied I could hear the disconnected murmur of her voice, behind a door that opened off the hall. When at last she returned, she turned a bright, false hostess’s smile on me.

'Monstrous of me to desert you so long, darling. I hope you haven't been bored to tears. I had to make some tiresome 'phone calls.'

She sat down again, making desultory conversation, asking me questions and not listening to the answers. Soon she yawned quite blankly.

'Absurd how sleepy this weather makes one. What do you say to bed? You look absolutely worn out.'

I got up but she remained in her chair.

'That's right. You run along. I'll stay up a little. I like to think at this time of night. I suppose Roman Catholics call it meditating'.

I stooped to kiss her but with the faintest movement, she averted her cheek.

'Too hot even for kissing,' she said. 'Don't you agree?'

As I walked away, feeling painfully clumsy in the pink dress I had already begun to loathe, she called after me.

'Oh Laura. Something I meant to tell you. Would you think me a perfect monster if I turned you out of your room tomorrow night.'

I stopped and looked back at her.

'No, of course not.'

'That 'phone call. It was two friends of mine who are getting married tomorrow. Something's gone wrong with their plans. They wanted to know if they could come here for their honeymoon. I hadn't the heart to say "No". And the room you're in is really the only *possible* one for a married couple.'

'Of course, Belle. I'll move my things in the morning.'

She smiled and yawned.

'Angelic of you. I knew you'd understand.'

I said awkwardly: 'Belle . . . wouldn't you rather . . . I mean, . . . wouldn't it be more tactful if I went?'

'Silly girl. Of course not. I wouldn't have you go for the world. I don't know whether you'll like Monty—it's his second marriage of course and he's years older than she is. But you'll adore Sybil. She's ravishing. Only eighteen . . . just a slip of a girl. She looks exactly like an arum lily.'

When I saw Sybil Delahaye the next night I had to admit that she did look like an arum lily. She was wearing her wedding dress which clung to her like a sheath, emphasizing her extreme

slimness. Her hair was the palest ash-blonde and her skin almost as white as her dress. She might have been insipid but for a pair of brilliant blue-grey eyes with marked brows and astonishingly dark lashes.

She seemed a gentle creature, with a fawnlike shyness. I had the impression that she was afraid of her husband, a tall heavy man with brutal good looks and a sulky voice. He kept a greedy eye on her all through dinner but she seldom looked at him and I often caught her glancing at Belle as if for reassurance. And each time Belle answered the look with a warm, brooding smile. Beyond Monty Delahaye's observing how appallingly hot it was even in the country, I do not think anyone spoke to me all through the meal.

Very early, Belle drew Sybil away to take her up to her room. I did not like to go out with them though the last thing I wanted was to be left alone with Sybil's husband. However, after a few minutes he grunted: 'Think I'll finish my cigar on the terrace; and I was free. It seemed safe to go upstairs now. Belle would be in my old room, saying goodnight to the bride and I could slip into my new, rather perfunctorily furnished one unobserved.

But as I walked up the wide shallow steps I saw two enlaced figures, one black, one white, ahead of me on the landing. They were apparently studying the blue Ming vase in the niche and Belle was murmuring something, in her humming voice, in the girl's ear. I could not very well retreat, but Belle must have heard me coming for she seemed to scoop Sybil up in her bent arm and sweep her up the next flight. At the same time she raised her voice and I heard her say:

'Your children must be as lovely as you. You don't know how happy you'd make me, darling, if the first one were born here.'

\* \* \*

It was fifteen years before I saw Malisfont again. My marriage to Harry had long ago broken up by slow, almost imperceptible stages. When he finally came and asked me if I would divorce him he said, with a long, puzzled look at me: 'I never imagined I'd be asking you that Laura. What was it that went wrong with us? Or perhaps what was it that never went right?' But I had no answer, any more than he had. The last thing he ever said to me was, 'You know . . . I felt we never really had a fair chance'.

Belle's death I saw in the papers. Like so many who are

devoured by the need to dominate, she had died of cancer. An operation might have saved her but she had refused to be treated except by a Christian Science healer. The popular dailies had headlines about 'an Edwardian "Belle"' and showed an old photograph of her in a Langtry bonnet and a 'last snapshot' in a cloche hat that almost hid her eyes so that I could make out little of her mouth. The coarse screen and the heavy retouching made it look like a negress's. The captions recalled her three marriages, Conway's 'tragic death' at Brooklands and gave her age as seventy-three.

After her death, Malisfont was sold. I heard rumours that it had been used, first as a country club, and then as a girls' school. Eventually it became a permanent feature among 'Desirable properties to be sold'.

One wet autumn I found myself stranded in the little town a mile from its gates. I plucked up my courage, went to the agent and asked for the key.

'We don't give many orders to view these days,' he said. 'It's in the gloomy side at the best of times. Why don't you wait for a fine day when you can see it to advantage?' He brightened when he found I did not want him to accompany me. I managed to convince him that I already knew the house. 'It's against the rules but I'll stretch a point,' he said, handing me a bunch of rusty keys. 'You'll find the place a bit deteriorated. But Malisfont's a fine investment for someone with a bit of capital and a bit of patience. Make a first-class building site.'

A line of washing flapped forlornly in the rain at one of the lodges but no inquisitive eyes appeared at a window.

I walked up the long drive between the dripping unkempt laurels. At last came the bend and the abrupt full stops of the pillars, dirty grey in the wet and blotched with moss. Ahead of me stood the great drenched blind house, with the reflection of the loisters dancing a little in the rain-pocked moat.

Feeling like a thief, I turned the key with difficulty in the lock of the great sham-Gothic door. I was shaking as I pushed it open. I had nervously to find everything different. The shock was that, after fifteen years, it was all perfectly recognizable. The chapel-like hall, now completely bare, had a hideous newness as if it had only just been completed. Along the passages, the white paint had turned sallow but here and there rusty hooks stuck out

from the cornice and I could remember the pictures that had hung from them.

My footsteps echoed unnaturally as I climbed the wide shallow stairs: a faint circle was still discernible in a niche where a blue Ming vase had stood. In the passage outside the main bedrooms had to stand still for a moment. My heart was beating so violently that I could have sworn someone else was walking about the house. Outside her bedroom I stopped again. I could not believe the paint on the door and on the swags above it was not fresher than the rest. Nor could I convince myself that if I opened it should find the room just as it had been fifteen years ago. Up to now Malisfont had been an empty shell, but here, here I was sure I was on her track. Hardly knowing what I did, I put my lips to the panel whispered 'Belle', and opened the door.

The room mocked me, emptier than any hitherto, and mutilated. The panelling had been roughly painted a bilious fawn, rags of drugget still clung to the worn and splintering parquet. Evidently it had been used as a school dormitory; black rails and posts divided it up into skeleton cages. Yet I shut my eyes and sniffed as if trying to catch, through all these superimposed layers of dust, varnish and stagnant air, the faintest trace of her scent. There was indeed something I could smell; mildewed and pungent with a touch of sickening sweetness. I followed it to the door of her bathroom in the wall just left of where the great gilded dressing-table used to stand. Someone had pasted a Mabel Lucie Atwell picture of a simpering baby on one of the panels. But the old French porcelain door knob, cracked under its greasy film of dust, was still there. I turned it and went in.

The green mosaic floor and the sunk bath were stained and dull; the silver mermaids had tarnished to a dark iridescence. But the Venetian mirror was still on the wall, so coated with dirt that my reflection swam towards me faint and discoloured as if in a muddy pool. Most of its frail glass flowers had been chipped off but now it was surrounded by a gaudy and monstrous frame. Damp had seeped in through a crack in the outer wall; all about the mirror and nowhere else was a shapeless mass of liver and yellow fungus. I stared, disgusted and sick, almost overpowered by the corrupt, sweetish smell. And somewhere inside myself I felt rather than heard Harry's voice, faint but unmistakable, saying 'I can't compete with the Malisfont orchids.'

LE CORBUSIER

# NEW WORLD OF SPACE

## INEFFABLE SPACE

MAKING possession of space is the first gesture of living things, of men and of animals, of plants and of clouds, a fundamental manifestation of equilibrium and of duration. The occupation of space is the first proof of existence.

The flower, the plant, the tree, the mountain stand forth, existing in a setting. If they one day command attention because of their satisfying and independent forms, it is because they are seen to be isolated from their context and extending influences all round them. We pause, struck by such interrelation in nature, and we gaze, moved by this harmonious orchestration of space, and we realize that we are looking at the reflection of light.

Architecture, sculpture and painting are specifically dependent on space, bound to the necessity of controlling space, each by its own appropriate means. The essential thing that will be said here is that the release of esthetic emotion is a special function of space.

ACTION OF THE WORK (architecture, statue or picture) on its surroundings: vibrations, cries or shouts (such as originate from the Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens), arrows darting away like rays, as if springing from an explosion; the near or distant site shaken by them, touched, wounded, dominated or caressed.

ACTION OF THE SETTING: the walls of the room, its dimensions, the public square with the various weights of its façades, the expanses or the slopes of the landscape even to the bare horizons of the plain or the sharp outlines of the mountains—the whole environment brings its weight to bear on the place where there is a work of art, the sign of man's will, and imposes on it its deep spaces or projections, its hard or soft densities, its violences or its softnesses. A phenomenon of concordance takes place, as exact as mathematics, a true manifestation of plastic acoustics; thus one may speak of one of the most subtle of all orders of phenomena, sound, as a conveyor of joy (music) or of oppression (racket).

Without making undue claims, I may say something about the 'magnification' of space that some of the artists of my generation attempted around 1910, during the wonderfully creative flight of cubism. They spoke of the *fourth dimension* with intuition and clairvoyance. A life devoted to art, and especially to a search after harmony, has enabled me, in my turn, to observe the same phenomenon through the practice of three arts: architecture, sculpture and painting.

The fourth dimension is the moment of limitless escape evoked by an exceptionally just consonance of the plastic means employed.

It is not the effect of the subject chosen; it is a victory of proportion in everything—the anatomy of the work as well as the carrying out of the artist's intentions whether consciously controlled or not. Achieved or unachieved, these intentions are always existent and are rooted in intuition, that miraculous catalyst of acquired, assimilated, even forgotten wisdom. In a complete and successful work there are hidden masses of implications, a veritable world which reveals itself to those whom it may concern, which means: to those who deserve it.

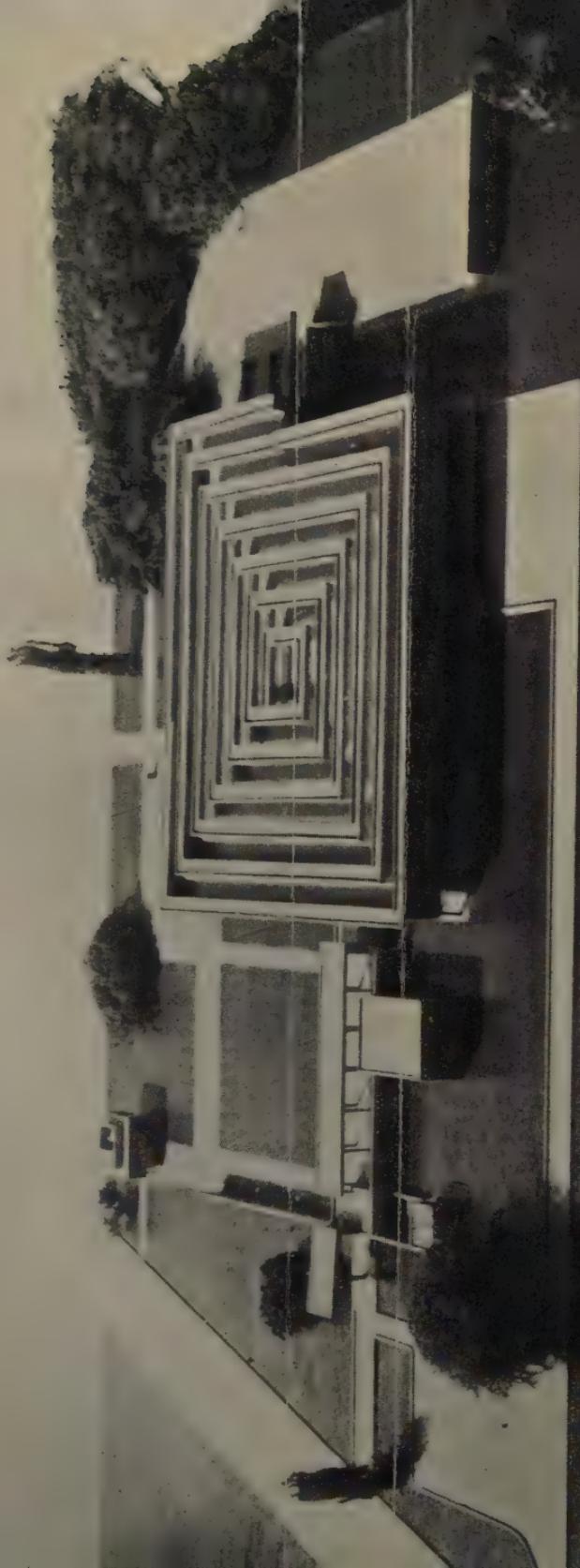
Then a boundless depth opens up, effaces the walls, drives away contingent presences, *accomplishes the miracle of ineffable space*.

I am not conscious of the miracle of faith, but I often live that of ineffable space, the consummation of plastic emotion.

Here I have been allowed to speak as a man of the laboratory dealing with his personal experiments carried out in the major arts which have been so unfortunately dissociated or separated for a century. Architecture, sculpture, painting: the movement of time and of events now unquestionably leads them towards synthesis.

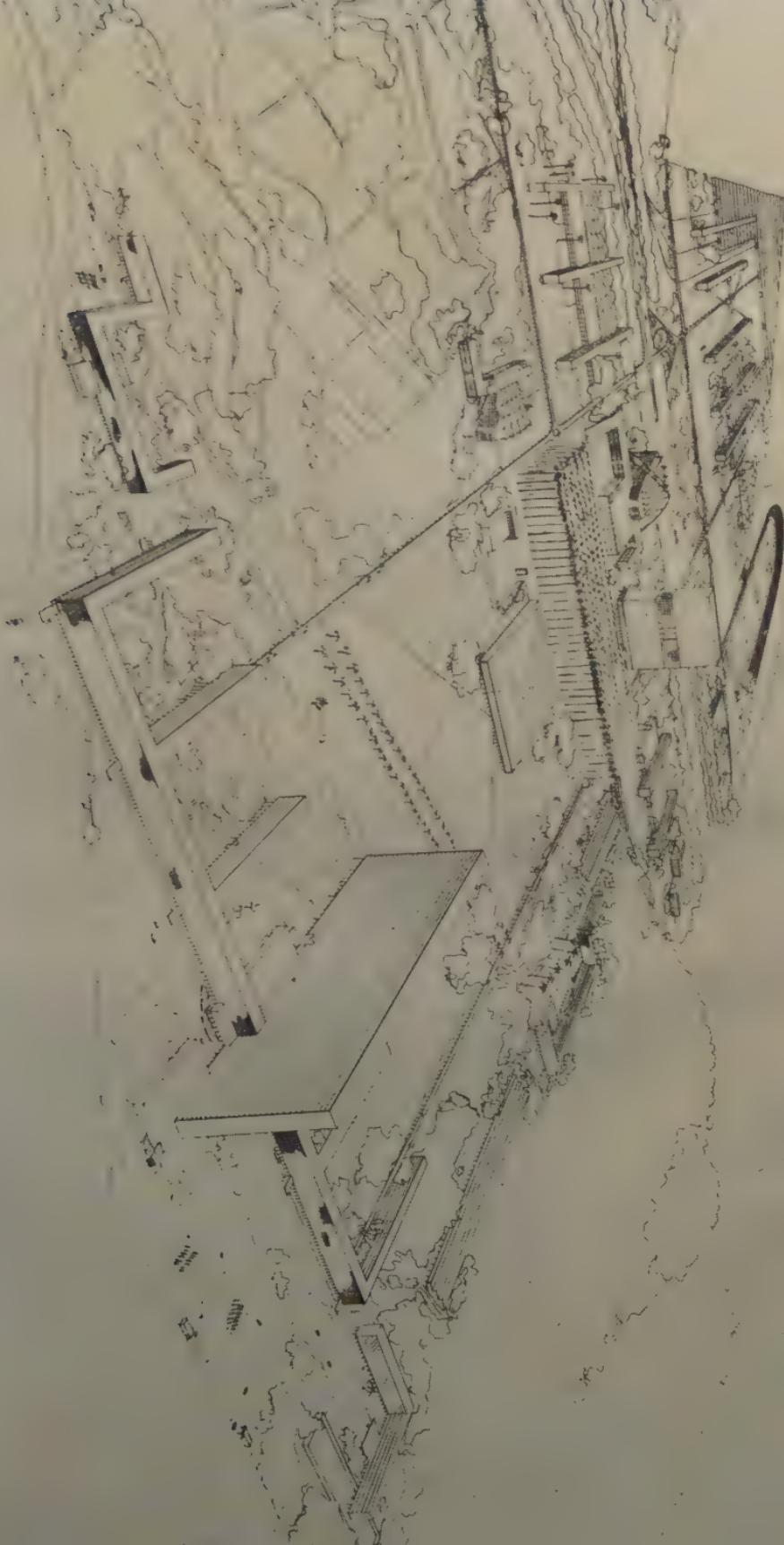
He who deals with architecture (what we understand as architecture and not that of the academies) must be an impeccably master of plastic form and a live and active connoisseur of the arts. Now that the architect assigns to the engineer part of his work and his responsibility, admission to the profession should be granted only to persons who are properly endowed with the sense of space, a faculty which psycho-technical methods seek to reveal. Lacking that sense, the architect loses his justification and his function. To keep such candidates away from building, then, is a service to social health.





Square spiral Museum, limitlessly extendable. 1930-40







I came to Athens twenty-three years ago; I spent twenty-one days on the Acropolis working ceaselessly and nourishing myself with the admirable spectacle. What was I able to do during those twenty-one days, I ask myself. What I know is that I acquired here the idea of irreducible truth. I left, crushed by the super-human aspect of the things on the Acropolis, crushed by a truth which is neither smiling nor light, but which is strong, which is one, which is implacable. I was not yet a man and, in the face of the life that was opening, it remained for me to develop character. I have tried to act and to create harmonious and human work.

I have done it with the image of this Acropolis in the depth of my spirit. My effort was honest, loyal, persistent, sincere.

The truth that I felt here is what made me a protagonist, someone who proposes something, something that will replace another, and take the place of the long established.

For that reason I am called a revolutionary. When I returned to western Europe and wished to follow the teaching of the schools, I saw that they were lying in the name of the Acropolis. I realized that the Academy deceived by flattering laziness; I had learned to reflect, to look and to go to the bottom of a question.

The Acropolis made me a rebel.

I have kept this certitude: 'Remember the clear, clean, intense, economical, violent Parthenon—that cry hurled into a landscape made of grace and terror. That monument to strength and purity.'

★ ★ ★

The inexplicable arises in that relationship which links our activity to the universe. It is there that the artist at the same time poses and resolves the question of emotion. Yet sometimes I feel emotion and cannot explain why the obvious has moved.

A work of art: that 'living double' of a live or dead or unknown being; that sincere mirror of an individual passion; that hour of profound conversation; that confession of a fellow man whose direct and eloquent words are spoken in absolute communion; perhaps that Sermon on the Mount.

Art always. Art is inseparable from being, a true, indissoluble power of exaltation, capable of giving pure happiness. It is in tune with the beating of the heart; it marks the stages of the difficult

progress through the undergrowth of the age and of the ages, toward a state of pure perception.

It marks out the interval between the moment when a vast and dominant nature overwhelms, and that when man, having acquired serenity, has a conception of that same nature and works in harmony with its law. There is the transition from the age of subjection to the age of creation—what is this transition but the history of civilization and the history of the individual? The multiple power of eras, the ecstasies of the individual, are reflected in the eloquent mirror of the arts.

The architectural revolution is achieved.

Accomplishments in construction:

1. The carrying functions (posts and beams) have been separated from the parts carried (walls or partitions); the framework is independent (steel or reinforced concrete); it finds its firm support in the subsoil without the aid of traditional foundation walls.

2. The façade, which no longer has any compulsory carrying function, may be considered, if need be, simply as a screen separating the inside from the out. It no longer bears the weight of the beams, and under these conditions, it leads at once to complete solution of the centuries-old problem of introducing the maximum amount of light into the interior of buildings. Henceforth the façade can be built of glass, even to the extent of its entire surface.

3. The independent framework of the building, coming in contact with the ground only by means of several points of support (the posts), permits, on occasion, the omission of a basement quarters, thus leaving open space under the building. This free space can be organized for specific purposes, such as solving certain traffic problems—particularly the inextricable snarl of pedestrian and auto traffic now mixed together in spite of the difference in their normal speeds, three and sixty miles an hour.

4. Finally, the framework of wooden roofs can be replaced henceforth by flat cement roofs whose horizontal surface will lend itself to valuable use.

5. Inside the structure—occupied only by economically spaced posts—the plan is entirely free, with vertical divisions (partitions) no longer being joined by placing one on top of the other from

or to floor, as the practice of weight-bearing walls used to require up to now.

Such, in brief, is the position of the architectural revolution as has been accomplished in this day by modern techniques.

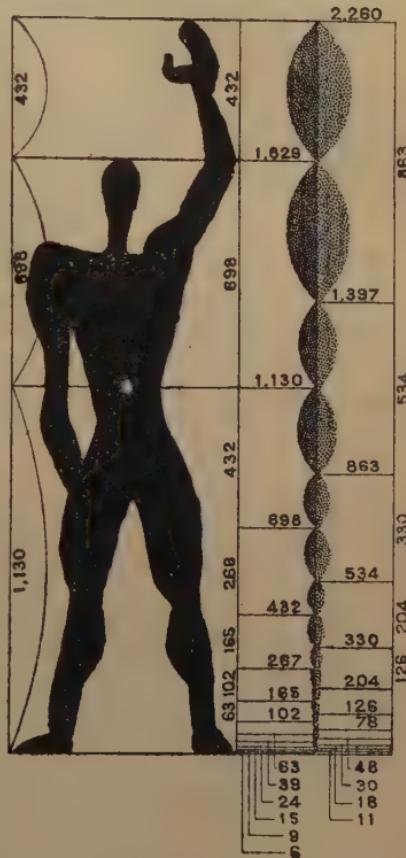
## THE MODULOR

lifetime concerned with the  
y of proportion has led to a  
covery which unites, in a  
gle mathematical combina-  
n, numbers and the human  
ure. This hitting upon signifi-  
nt values has resulted in a  
reasuring instrument of tre-  
ndous importance which  
ay be used for everything that  
constructed in series or other-  
se, such as machines, build-  
gs, furniture, books. The loss  
human scale that took place  
the course of the past century  
ould henceforth have its  
astrious effects brought to an  
d. . . . The harmony recap-  
ed by the *Modulor* would be  
thout salt if it were ex-  
usively mathematical. Happily  
is in intimate accord with man.  
sed on the golden mean,  
ich is found in the propor-

ns of the human body, it establishes an essential bond between the pure mathematical event and the determining factor of the building field—to construct a shelter for the body of man.

... From the measures of proportion the *Modulor* provides, we can derive extraordinary combinations. But, first, let us consider a basic dimension upon which to establish its values. It is clear that the human stature will provide this measurement, but what specific measurement of height are we to use?

A basic measurement of **SIX FEET**—72 inches—is adopted here. It is believed to be typical of the stature of the northern peoples.



Its metrical equivalent is 182.9 cm. By deduction, from this basic measurement, the values of the *Modulor* are determined as:

Solar plexus: 44.498 in. or 1130.3 mm.

Upraised arm: 88.997 in. or 2260.5 mm.

These three values, taken from the position on the human figure of the top of the head, the solar plexus, and the extremity of the fingers when the arm is raised, determine the gradations.

... Thus it provides a series of measurements of proportion capable of usefully guiding and conditioning all sorts of projects in the building field, whether the design problem is on the scale of the smallest household object, or on that of city planning itself.

It provides a rule of harmony on which to base the products related to building and through which to create a universality of dimension, particularly among those objects planned for prefabrication. The wealth of the combinations it offers precludes its being used as a tool of uniformity.

The *Modulor* is a work tool, and as such it is a companion to the compass and the pencil.

(Extracts from 'New World of Space' by Le Corbusier, published by Reynal and Hitchcock, New York, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston)

ALAN ROSS

## NOVELIST-PHILOSOPHERS

### XIV—THE DEAD CENTRE: AN INTRODUCTION TO NATHANAEL WEST

WRITERS, like seismographs, record the emotional charts of societies; so in the end, as obviously must happen, a period of time with its behaviourisms and characteristics, conveys to our mental retina an instinctive pattern. The artist brings to the surface those qualities that, mid-way between germs and tremors, live anonymously feeding on individual frustration. Once a society has been characterized or caricatured (has, in fact, been given a poetic or non-poetic name), it is freed. This release, which

mainly given by the artist, acts as a standard for the duration that social pattern—its people, like actors in a silent film suddenly given words, move through the norms and extremes of their lives with a new-found conviction. The artistic truth, the 'right' way of behaviour for their time has been established. So, looking at them through the wrong end of a telescope, events appear as extensions or absorptions of those larger personalities that formalized them.

Yet, even when our patterns of culture appear to have been established, new, sometimes uncomfortable, evidences can internalize. A myth in the light of revaluation is often destroyed. Similarly, and unspectacularly out of seeming neglect, a myth can establish itself on the sole basis of its truth. Our conception of epochs of time naturally alters as our knowledge of them increases. What seemed obvious to the point almost of stylization appears curiously in a new key. It is like a gramophone record that, having always been played on one side, is found to have another that is equally acceptable.

The twenties and thirties in both England and America have been pretty closely documented. More nearly perhaps than in any previous era, literature became socially representational. The mirror held up to humanity, its eccentricities and perversions, its fashionable social and political conscience, disgorged a reflection that, if anything, was too close. The heroic distaste for heroism, the intellectual's distaste for himself and his embracing of his opposite, the divesting of romance from illusions amongst those most in love with illusions, all formed part of the dismantling of the man personality that an age, out of love with itself, one moment being the waves, the next disembowelled at their base, found necessary to save its face. One by one each writer presented his or her case, then proceeded to destroy it—*Eyeless in Gaza*, *The Woman Who Rode Away*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Ulysses*, *The Memorial*, *in America*, *Fiesta*, *The Great Gatsby*, *U.S.A.* *Appointment in* *Marra*—one by one these cancelled each other out. Each successive writer grew to know too much. Sophistication left the novelist dry.

Yet in general there remained a mixture of nostalgia and sadness, a residue of that good living which illuminates prose, as it does face, with a kind of dispassionate tenderness and which is the product of emotional prosperity, of a knowledge of good days.

In England the class struggle of the thirties was reflected in literature by gestures of *avant-garde* idealism. The artistic truth in literary sympathies appeared also to be a political truth—but it was a conclusion English writers arrived at through a series of well-bred intellectual convictions, rather than a brute confrontation with the facts of economic disaster. Their prototypes in the American slump—the inheritors of the Jazz Age débris, the sown-off idealists who found themselves with not even an empty bomb in their pockets—had to learn the harder way. Their pessimism was not the reverse side of politico-literary idealism; it was a despair born from being witnesses of a suffering enormously outside their control. The wisecrack had frozen in their cynical mouths, the cocktail bravado of sexual indulgence gone flat like bad champagne. Somewhere hidden, Man was being anonymously pinned down with this weight of suffering on his back, this noisy civilized burden demanding a new martyrdom. It is this ruthless outline of collapse that Nathanael West creates more savagely and poetically than any other contemporary writer in his two important novels *Miss Lonelyhearts* and *The Day of the Locust*—blueprints of the faithless Christ-symbols that in the end stood for the American common man, like bitter flowers, as he lay on the ground at the stockades of his own defeat.

Altogether, Nathanael West wrote four novels. Besides the two already mentioned, which were the second (1933) and fourth (1939) in point of time, there were *The Dream Life of Balthazar Snell*, printed in a limited edition in 1931, and *A Cool Million*, published in 1934. About West's private life little appears to be generally known. He was born in 1906 (his real name was Nathaniel Wallenstein Weinstein), educated at Brown University where he graduated in Philosophy, and then consecutively manager of a residential hotel-club in New York, and associate editor, with George Grosz, of a short-lived satirical magazine called *American Mercury*. His wife was Eileen Mckenney, the original of the play *My Sister Eileen*, written by Ruth Mckenney, and West's own sister married S. J. Perelman. So his links with the semi-fashionable, literary and stage world were fairly constant, until, after the publication of *Miss Lonelyhearts*, West and his wife went to Hollywood. They remained till their death in a car accident in 1940. The last fifteen years of his life West spent working on film scripts, among which were *Advice to the Lovelorn* (the adaptation of *Miss Lonelyhearts*).

*He Came Back, I Stole a Million, and Men Against the Sky.* He was thirty-four at the time of his death. Perhaps the most remarkable things about West's career are its unevenness and its development. West's early associations and writings are bitter, extremist, surreal and aggressive. The criticism underlying them is based on a disgust that is not far from hysteria, and which in a book like *The Dream Life of Balso Snell* is coupled with a complete disregard for any audience. So the language is obscure, extravagant, privately allusive and contemptuously scatological.

Yet from this unrelated little essay in intellectual gauchery, West could suddenly strip his writing of all pretence, of all arrogant obscurantism, and produce a novel of the direct and economic intensity of *Miss Lonelyhearts*, in which every word is used exactly and functionally—and then again, immediately after, in *A Cool Million* write a hurried, exaggerated allegory without a phrase of distinction. Only several years later, when he had got through an incubatory period in Hollywood, and had written *The Day of the Locust*, was it apparent that West was somewhere on the way to integrating his gifts, to merging his bitterness and savagery into a wider, more organic pattern without losing his edge. *The Day of the Locust* marked his most important advance, the step from a political to a human view of drama. Basically, West was always a sociological writer, moved by the horrible emptiness of mass lives; and in this sense all his books are indictments, not much of economic systems, but of life itself. *Life is terrible*, that was the despairing conclusion that led nowhere and which was the motive spring for his novels. For West there was no religious redemption to be found in human weakness, no transfiguring use of good-and-evil, no compensation in the physical life. Seediness, apathy remained just seediness and apathy. The joke was on civilization, and West's own attitude was inexpressible through the perversion of great tides of compassion into relentless observation. So just as *Miss Lonelyhearts* is West's greatest book, because it is conceived most purely as a formal work of art, and is flawless within its structure, *The Day of the Locust* is his most mature because in it his criticism of life is not intruding between the characters, nor his pity confronting them. They exist simply in their relation to one another; the hidden reformer in West has contented himself with being an artist.

*The Dream Life of Balso Snell*, in any analysis of West's novels

must, if it be considered at all, be subjected to a different sort of criteria—for the other three books, in the sense that they document from social, political, and what one might call 'grotesque' angles, recognized symptoms of a disintegrating society, more or less hang together. *Balso Snell* analyses only the disintegration of the Self, and its illusion of superiority at its most pathetic moment of neurotic isolation. The story, since it is a dream, dispenses completely with plausibility. From its opening, when Balso Snell enters into the Trojan Horse, through his meetings in its viscous landscape with various unrelated figures—an art-loving guide, a naked man in a derby who calls himself Maloney the Areopagite and who is engaged on writing the life of Saint Puce (a flea who lived in the armpit of Christ), a psychotic twelve-year-old boy with a passion for his schoolmistress whom he hopes to win by writing pseudo-Russian journals, till the end, when the schoolmistress materializes and after two metamorphoses is had by Balso Snell himself, the book is a piece of extreme exhibitionism, sexual, cynical and allusive. Striving after an original, startling style, a fresh form and way of writing, West threw to the winds the coherence, the truth to life, that he later rediscovered. *Balso Snell* is a sneer in the bathroom mirror at Art—cocksure, contemptuous, well-informed and rejecting openly the very thing that it was straining towards. There is a very revealing passage in the middle of the book, where Balso is reading a pamphlet written by the young boy, in which West explains the necessity for the extravagant bitterness of the book. 'All my acting has but one purpose—the attraction of the female. If it had been possible for me to attract by exhibiting a series of physical charms, my hatred would have been less, but I found it necessary to substitute strange conceits, wise and witty sayings, peculiar conduct, Art, for the muscles, teeth, hair of my rivals.'

• 'All this much exhibited intelligence is but a development of the instinct to please. My case is similar to that of a bird called the Amblyornis inornata. As his name indicates, the Inornata is a dull-coloured, ugly bird. Yet the Inornata is cousin to the Bird of Paradise. Because he lacks his cousin's brilliant plumage, he has to exteriorize internal feathers. . . . Still more, the Bird of Paradise cannot be blamed for the quality of his tail—it just grew. The Inornata, however, is held personally responsible for his performance as an artist.'

There was a time when I felt that I was indeed a rare spirit. Then I had genuinely expressed my personality with a babe's light in confessing the details of its inner life. Soon, however, in order to interest my listeners, I found it necessary to shorten my outpourings; to make them, by straining my imagination, spectacular. Oh! how much work goes into the search for the old, the escape from the same!

'Because of women like Saniette, I acquired the habit of extravagant thought. I now convert everything into fantastic entertainment and the extraordinary has become an obsession. . . .' West's natural reticence, the laughing at his own laugh rather than be laughed at, the savage defensive attack he employs as arguments against what he really wishes to believe in, are all explained in *Baldo Snell*. It is the clue to all his later books; yet, despite its moments of brilliant writing, its poetic economy, it is the one book West wrote that has nothing to say.

*Miss Lonelyhearts*, which has been called a 'modernized, faithless, Pilgrim's Progress', is the formalizing and objectifying of the bellious vision of *Baldo Snell*. West has accepted the fact that an audience exists, and that art is communication. Preoccupation with the self has given way to an identification with society, and the stone that *Baldo Snell* dropped into the middle of the pond has now reached the outer banks.

Ostensibly, *Miss Lonelyhearts* tells the story of a reporter, who, failed to write an agony column and answer daily the letters desperate with human misery addressed to his paper, finds the nacea he has to offer turning sour in his hand.

'Although the deadline was less than a quarter of an hour away, he was still working on his leader. He had gone as far as: "Life is worth while, for it is full of dreams and peace, gentleness andstasy, and faith that burns like a clear white flame on a grim dark altar." But he found it impossible to continue. The letters were no longer funny. He could not go on finding the same joke funny thirty times a day for months on end. And on most days he received more than thirty letters, all of them alike, stamped from the dough of suffering with a heart-shaped cookie stamp.'

Throughout the book, which interweaves *Miss Lonelyhearts'* own life with the episodic relations he has with his editor's wife, his involvements with his correspondents, and his gradual conviction

that Christian love alone can adequately soften this mass hopelessness, there is a constant counterpointing of Miss Lonelyhearts' struggle for some sort of solution to the human equation and his editor, Shrike's, destruction of it. Miss Lonelyhearts comes to stand for Intention, Shrike for Reality. From the very beginning, when Shrike, looking over Miss Lonelyhearts' typewriter, says 'The same old stuff. Why don't you give them something new and hopeful? Tell them about art. Here, I'll dictate: *Art is a Way Out*', it is apparent that there can be no serious attempt to grapple with the problem (for there is no answer), but merely an attempt to sugar the pill in as hard-boiled, efficient and calculated a way as possible. Later in the book, when Miss Lonelyhearts himself has reached a position where he is as much in need of salvation as his most desperate reader, Shrike elaborates and then punctures the various fantasy escapes that men dupe themselves with. Shrike takes over Miss Lonelyhearts' rôle in real life, but instead of feeling bound to offer a remedy, his own frustration compels him to make any solution—Christ, Art, the reclusive life—appear phoney because he himself refuses to accept their premises, and so, always speaking as one who knows them all and has gone beyond them, cannot allow others the self-deception he is deprived of. *Miss Lonelyhearts* is short and brilliantly authentic. The newspaper background, the alternation of self-pity, ineffectual love-making, clinical disgust, and the hopeless efforts at a normal life, are contrived and pointed with a superb poetic economy and detail that charges the whole book with a hallucinatory fever. Though the properties of the story are extremely commonplace, no different from a hundred film-script or stories with a journalist-martyr theme, West's succinct handling of them and his approach through a central character that is neither aggressive nor successful, raise the story to the intensive level of a poem. Every word is part of a pattern and rhythm whose water-tight structure is so exactly balanced that a phrase too much or out of key would destroy the breathless control of the whole book. West is writing no longer with brilliant intellectual exhibitionism, but with a bitter, internal passion that has no let-up. The curious religious strain in West's writing, a sort of pessimistic Messianism in whose aura America becomes a glorified Oxford Street, dirty, haphazard, doped, reaches its fullest expression towards the end of *Miss Lonelyhearts*. The final scene, where the

cripple husband of one of the column's correspondents (a nympho like a female police captain who has seduced Miss Lonelyhearts) falls on him and Miss Lonelyhearts thinks in his delusion that he is now one with Christ and that the cripple is a test of his love, culminates in a tragedy of miscomprehension which symbolizes horrifyingly and finally the unreality of the Christian myth. Miss Lonelyhearts runs down the stairs with his arms open to receive the cripple, who, imagining he is being attacked, shouts out. But Miss Lonelyhearts, interpreting the shout as a 'cry for help from a desperate, Harold S., Catholic Mother, Broken-hearted, Broad-shouldered, Sick-of-it-all, Disillusioned-with-tubercular-husband. He was running to succour them with love', falls on the cripple as he turns to get away. A gun in the cripple's hand goes off and they both roll part of the way down the stairs.

That is the end of the book. West says nothing more—there is in fact no more to be said. But already in this book certain estisms that remain constant in all four books, begin to emerge. Perhaps most important is West's view of character and his treatment of it. For none of his people are seen 'in the round', as individuals created for their own distinctiveness; nor yet are they exactly 'types' or vehicles for ideas in the Aldous Huxley sense. West uses characters as an architect uses windows—to let in light on a central character and to show him, but not offer him, escape. They exemplify modes of living that are never developed beyond the point where they become absurd; and at one point or another they all become absurd. These are West's primary characters: Beagle Darwin in *Baldo Snell*, Shrike, Miss Lonelyhearts in *Miss Lonelyhearts*, Shagpoke Whipple in *A Cool Million*, Homer, Faye Greener and Tod in *The Day of the Locust*. But around them, and though they are main characters they never 'come off' in the sense that West makes them succeed in their lives, there are a host of abnormal minor figures, whose abnormality and pathos act as a series of reservoirs, almost in the form of a Greek chorus, for West's savagery and inverted violence. As in the freak shows in Oxford street, their deformity is a mockery of normality rather than vice versa. In *Baldo Snell* it is the beautiful hunchback with whom Balso falls in love ('The lobby was crowded with the many beautiful girl-cripples who congregate there because Art is their only solace, most men looking upon their strange forms with distaste. But it was otherwise with Baldo Snell. He likened their

disarranged hips, their short legs, their humps, their splay feet, their wall-eyes, to ornament. Their strange fore-shortenings, hanging heads, bulging spinesacks, were a delight. . . .'), in *Miss Lonelyhearts* the cripple, Doyle, in *A Cool Million* nearly everyone, in *The Day of the Locust* it is no more than an awful horror at the blind forces of ignorance—superbly symbolized in the riot at the end—that make escape from their decontamination impossible. In the end one has to live and die with the mob. But West's political satire is concerned with the way in which the sheeplike dependence of the mob, their malleableness, is made use of for ulterior political ends.

*A Cool Million* tackles this problem overtly. Written as a burlesquing, melodramatic parody of the Horatio Alger best-seller, it describes, in prose that is like a long heavy wink, the adventures of a country bumpkin called Lemuel Pitkin in search of success on the American pattern of free enterprise. By the time he has finished he has been in jail, lost his teeth, his eyes, a leg, his scalp, witnessed an infinite number of rapes, riots, and been the tool for both Communist and Fascist organizations. Finally, he is shot by a political assassin and made a martyr.

In its awareness of political technique, its devastatingly true analysis of unrestricted Capitalist method, its foreshadowing of Americanism turned into a possible Fascism, *A Cool Million* is brilliantly successful. Unfortunately, it fails just where West's particularly acrid and sharp talent was usually most recognizable, in its writing. For having decided on a mock-melodramatic style ('When our hero regained consciousness,' 'In the half-gloom of the cabin, Lem was horrified to see the Pike man busily tearing off Betty's sole remaining piece of underwear. She was struggling as best she could, but the ruffian from Missouri was too strong for her,' etc.), West sacrificed the stylistic hallmark that makes a writer's work compact and homogeneous. As it is, *A Cool Million* might have been written by anyone, and there is not a phrase in it with the poetic terseness of description that characterized all the other books.

The villain of the story is 'Shagpoke' Whipple, an ex-President of the United States, and a believer in American opportunism. Whipple now lives in retirement in Rat River, where he is President of the National Bank, and is visited one day by Lemuel Pitkin in search of advice. Whipple, citing his own past as precedent, tells

Pitkin to go out into the world and make his fortune. Pitkin meets with one misfortune after the other, is duped, robbed and wrongfully imprisoned. In gaol he finds Whipple, whose bank failed and who was convicted of fraud. 'My boy,' says Whipple, when Pitkin meets him in one of the prison corridors carrying a bedpan, 'there are two evils undermining this country which we must fight tooth and nail. These two arch-enemies of the American spirit, the spirit of fair play and open competition, are Wall Street and the Communists.' The next time Pitkin meets Whipple, some weeks after he is out of gaol, he finds him in the process of starting his new political party—the National Revolutionary movement, 'because', as he tells Pitkin, 'how could I, Shagpoke Whipple, ever bring myself to accept a program which promised to take from American citizens their inalienable birthright, the right to sell their labor and their childrens' labor without restrictions as to either price or hours?' Pitkin is enrolled in the movement, made a Commander, and then when the first party meeting is broken up by International Jewish bankers and Communists, beaten up.

In the course of the book, almost every popular American bogey is caricatured. Pitkin is victimized in a series of near-slapstick episodes which, despite their rather laboured telling, are extremely amusing. But beneath them lurk a very real horror and an acute feeling of sinister inevitability. The epilogue describes a future national holiday, with the youth of America parading up and down Fifth Avenue in Pitkin's honour and singing the Lemuel Pitkin song:

A million hearts for Pitkin, oh!

To do and die with Pitkin, oh!

Reviewing them from a special stand is Shagpoke Whipple. When the parades have marched past him and gathered round his reviewing stand, Whipple addresses them in a remarkable closing speech that ends the book.

'What', he says, 'made Lemuel Pitkin great? Let us examine his life. First we see him as a small boy, light of foot, fishing for bullheads in the Rat River of Vermont. Later, he attends the Pittsville High School, where he is captain of the nine and an excellent outfielder. Then he leaves for the big city to make his fortune. All this is in the honourable tradition of his country and his people and he has the right to expect certain rewards. Jail is his

first reward. Poverty his second. Violence is his third. Death is his last.'

Whipple goes on to analyse Pitkin's greatness, and then winds up with: 'But he did not live or die in vain. Through his martyrdom the National Revolutionary Party triumphed, and by that triumph this country was delivered from sophistication, Marxism and International Capitalism. Through the National Revolution its people were purged of alien diseases and America became again American. Hail, Lemuel Pitkin! All Hail, the American Boy!'

West's last book, *The Day of the Locust*, written after he had been in Hollywood for three years, is by far his most ambitious and mature. It is the most objective of his novels, and the one in which his own personal integration most nearly coincides with the form of his book. Its deficiencies, such as they are, come from a slight slowness in the narrative's momentum, and a series of sub-plots whose inter-relation is never quite developed enough to appear obvious. But once the real theme emerges, West's confident astringency of language seems to return and the last two-thirds of the book contain some of his very best writing.

Primarily, *The Day of the Locust* is about middle-aged, middle-class discontent—a discontent that is dangerous because it has developed from illusions of security and now, like a carnivorous mass, is waiting to batten on to anything abnormal enough to stimulate its drugged senses. The background is Hollywood—not the Hollywood of film-stars (which though never mentioned looms like a sunstruck thundercloud behind the sultry action of the book's characters), but the Hollywood exemplified by unimportant hangers-on fighting unsuccessfully for a little lime-light (Faye Greener, a small-time blonde, and her father Harry, faded music-hall star), an ex-undergraduate artist lured by a talent scout to learn scenery design (Tod Hackett, the *Miss Lonelyhearts* symbol of the book), a retired clerk ordered to Hollywood for his health (Homer Simpson), and around these the men whom Fay attracts on the different levels of their lust—a Mexican cock-fighter, a Cowboy tailor's dummy, and a bookmaking dwarf. Like a chorus around them, in a yet wider circle, are the unnamed crowd extras—people 'whose clothing was sombre and badly cut, bought from mail-order houses. They loitered on the corners or stood with their backs to the shop windows and stared at everyone'.

no passed. When their stare was returned, their eyes filled with trepidation. At this time Tod knew very little about them except that they had come to California to die.'

It is these people, an endless procession of loiterers, of grown-up embittered Pitkins and Doyles, whom West makes potentially capable of mass riot, blood-letting and lynching, such as, in fact, takes place in the last chapter of the book at a premiere on behalf of an incident, of which most of the crowd are completely ignorant, but which does as a scapegoat for their frustration.

West's description of this crowd, a piece of prose that sums up the whole atmosphere and tension of the book, shows the combined savagery and pity of his writing at its best.

'New groups, whole families, kept arriving. He could see a change come over them as soon as they had become part of the crowd. Until they reached the line, they looked diffident, almost primitive, but the moment they had become part of it, they turned arrogant and pugnacious. It was a mistake to think them harmless curiosity seekers. They were savage and bitter, especially the middle-aged and the old, and had been made so by boredom and disappointment.'

'All their lives they had slaved at some kind of dull, heavy labour, behind desks and counters . . . dreaming of the leisure that would be theirs when they had enough. Where else should they go but California, the land of sunshine and oranges?

'Once there, they discover that sunshine isn't enough. They get tired of oranges, even of avocado pears and passion fruit. Nothing happens. . . . Did they slave so long just to go to an occasional Dawa picnic? What else is there? They watch the waves come in at Venice. There wasn't any ocean where most of them came from, but after you've seen one wave, you've seen them all. The same is true of the airplanes at Glendale. If only a plane would crash once in a while so that they could watch the passengers being consumed in a "holocaust of flame", as the newspapers put it. But the planes never crash.'

'Their boredom becomes more and more terrible. They realize that they've been tricked and burn with resentment. Every day of their lives they read the newspapers and went to the movies. Both fed them on lynchings, murder, sex crimes, explosions, wrecks, love nests, fires, miracles, revolutions, wars. This daily diet made sophisticates of them. The sun is a joke. Oranges can't

titillate their faded palates. Nothing can ever be violent enough to make taut their slack minds and bodies.'

West's Hollywood is made up of degeneracy and brothels, of failure and sexual desire, of cock-fighting and third-rate boarding houses. But more than anything it is made up of significant boredom, of an etiolated ennui that is pointed in beautiful detail, so that the whole canvas on which the motiveless actions take place acquires a Breughel-like stillness, as if all the monstrous things going on were part of a very ordinary pattern. And, indeed, the pattern of all West's books is ordinary; it is only the extraordinary stylized grotesques on the edge, the narrative logic that touches the rim of fantasy, that charge it with the nervous garishness, the disproportionate perspective that, like the beautiful hunchback in *Baldo Snell*, mock normality with their own freakishness.

Despite the fact that out of his four books only two can be called successful, West's slightness of reputation is not easy to understand. For *Miss Lonelyhearts* and *The Day of the Locust* ran almost with any novels that came out of America in the thirties—more condensed, penetrating and poetic than many, that with much larger scope and subsequent recognition, purported to give the lie to the American scene.

Perhaps the savagery of West's portrait, his making of the whole political and economic racket so undisguisedly repulsive and meaningless, was too near the bone for an American audience with a mass neurosis, and a guilty conscience. There were, of course, other factors; the fact that *Miss Lonelyhearts'* publisher went bankrupt almost immediately after the book was issued, and the shadow of an imminent war that took American thought beyond its own frontiers. Perhaps it is only now, when some of West's books are again being made available, that he will reach the wider audience, with a different view on both him and his times, of which he was originally deprived.